



BE SECTOR PUSHES FOR RESTART

THE business events industry is urgently calling on Australia's Federal and State Governments to differentiate exhibitions and business events from mass gatherings, as a way of expediting a domestic post-COVID industry reboot as early as Aug this year.

Exhibition and Event Association of Australia (EEAA) CEO Claudia Sagripanti said it was crucial that officials understand that the business events industry "can operate under a controlled set of 'bio-safe' principles and should not be subject to mass gathering restrictions" that would apply to sporting fixtures and festivals.

"The business events industry runs highly organised events where we can trace visitors, delegates, speakers and exhibitors as well as monitor, track and put in place a range

of measures that ensure these events comply with government measures on hygiene and physical distancing."

Sagripanti noted that the EEAA was working with the Business Events Council of Australia and the Venue Management Association to develop safety and hygiene principles for the business events community.

"The principles will support stringent public health guidelines to manage exhibitions, conferences, meetings and events and ensure exhibitors, speakers, attendees, customers and venue/contractor employees are safe," she said.

The EEAA is urging Governments to provide a clear timetable on when the industry can restart, due to the lead-time required for planning and implementation.

"August/September and the

last quarter of 2020 is vital to recovery," Sagripanti said, giving time to ensure infection rates are controlled but at the same time giving some certainty to the industry which contributes over \$35 billion annually to the national economy.

In new guidelines announced by Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Fri, even at the lowest level of planned relaxations in the roadmap to recovery, all gatherings would be limited to a maximum of 100 as the "new normal" while the virus remains a threat.

The call for clarity and distinction from mass consumer events has been mirrored across the Tasman by Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) CEO Lisa Hopkins, who last week said "we believe we can safely manage indoor business events of up to 500".

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

Noosa is free

TOURISM Noosa has waived all joining and membership renewal fees until 30 Jun 2021, as a way of supporting local businesses and encouraging further participation.

Membership benefits include the opportunity to participate in business events groups, along with a host of training sessions, regular networking and involvement in Tourism Noosa's strategic marketing program including the Visiting Journalist program, cooperative advertising & more - visitnoosa.com.au.

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WHAT happens when you stage a major event and nobody turns up?

While not quite in the MICE category, that's the predicament faced by the citizenry of Poland, where nobody at all was able to participate in a general election last weekend.

Polling stations remained closed to the country's 38 million people, after the government and opposition were unable to agree on a COVID-19-safe solution that would also be constitutional.

The current government - which also happens to be deeply unpopular - says the coronavirus situation is not sufficiently severe to defer the official poll, but has proposed legislation that it be conducted by postal vote.

However the opposition-controlled Senate rejected the proposal after delaying its decision for weeks, leaving no time for officials to actually get things organised.

MyCEB platform

THE Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) has launched the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO) webEDGE platform, giving meeting professionals access to a comprehensive 14-module congress project management training course - myceb.com.my.

Google upgrade

GOOGLE is now offering enhanced features for its "Google Meet" online video conferencing platform, including meetings for up to 250 people, live streaming and recording.

The upgrades are free for users of the G Suite system through until 30 Sep 2020, and follow other recent enhancements including a 16-person gallery view.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen video meeting platforms soar in popularity, with Google hoping to reclaim market share from industry leader Zoom.

Carriageworks into administration

SYDNEY arts and events centre Carriageworks has been placed into voluntary administration, with operators citing plummeting income due to COVID-19 restrictions.

CEO Blair French said since opening in 2017 the Redfern centre had become a "Sydney institution," attracting a million visitors every year.

"But with restrictions on social gatherings likely to remain in place for some time to come, the board determined that it had no alternative but to place the company into voluntary administration," he said.

MEA AWARDS IN THE CLOUD



THE Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) 2019 National Awards have been re-imagined as an online virtual event, to be broadcast live from Sydney's International Convention Centre on Fri 29 May.

The new format will utilise ICC Sydney's in-house facilities, and will combine the state and national awards into a single event with a ticket price of \$45 for members and \$55 for non-members including GST.

"Given the challenging year we have had to date, it is fantastic to take a moment to celebrate the innovation, creativity and passion our industry members are renowned for in creating outstanding events," said MEA Chair, Kate Smith.

"It is time to celebrate these attributes that will assist in the recovery of our industry sector too," she added.

The online event will feature live entertainment, an in-studio MC, red carpet including a best dressed competition and even a dedicated MEALIVE 2019 Awards Spotify playlist.

The ICC broadcasting centre includes multiple complete custom-built studios with 10m x 3.5m LED screen backdrops, 4K

cameras, overhead PTZ cameras for aerial views and broadcast quality lighting.

Interfaces are available for multiple platforms, including web streaming such as Vimeo and Facebook Live as well as video conferencing via Zoom and Cisco's Webex.

MEA CEO Robyn Johnson said the organisation would have been hosting its Evolve 2020 event at the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley this week, along with the awards ceremony.

However COVID-19 has necessitated the alternative plan which she said would "deliver a much-needed boost of positivity for the industry".

The broadcast will take place 6pm-8pm on 29 May, with any payments already made for tickets for the state or national awards able to be credited towards the awards ceremony broadcast.

Additional balances remaining can be used for extra tickets or credited against MEA's other professional development events, including Evolve, over the next three years.

Tickets can be purchased online now via the website at meetingevents.com.au.