



VACCINES FOR VENUES?

WITH the imminent roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines in Australia, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian has raised the prospect of mandating inoculations for people who want to attend venues across the state.

Speaking on Sydney radio yesterday, the Premier (**pictured**) said that while she was not in favour of forcing people to do anything, "there should be incentives in place for people to do certain things.

"It's for their own safety and the safety of others and the conversations that will be had...the more people that are vaccinated, the greater the likelihood that we can have a return to normality as we know it," she said.

Berejiklian noted that some airlines, including Qantas, have flagged a "no-jab no-fly" policy, saying the State Government was considering whether to allow venues to set their own rules about what they believe would be COVID-safe.

The Service NSW app, which



is already compulsory for check-in at venues to support contact tracing efforts, could be enhanced to allow users to prove they have received a COVID-19 immunisation.

Currently the Government expects vaccines to start to be deployed in Australia next month, with the aim of providing COVID-19 jabs free to everyone who wants them by Oct 2021.

Geelong BDM



BUSINESS Events Geelong has appointed Claudia Baranski as its first ever in-house Business Development Manager.

With 20 year' experience in the meetings and events sector, Baranski will work to drive new business to Greater Geelong, The Bellarine and Werribee.

Her career has included roles with the Melbourne Convention Bureau, DG Global, Peter Rowland Catering and the Australian Institute of Management.

Business Events Geelong Bureau Manager, Mark Day, said the timing of Baranski's appointment "could not be more perfect as we gear up for a surge of regional conferencing amidst international border closures".

Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.

Luxperia partnership

THE Luxperia Collective of small- to mid-sized Destination Management Companies (DMCs) has partnered with UK-based DMCfinder to make it easier for organisers to book events and MICE groups within Asia in an "ethical yet competitive way".

Luxperia co-founder Linh Le told *Business Events News* the boutique network had been developing its value proposition during 2020, creating a "customer centric process that solves event buyers' needs when sourcing a responsible and experienced DMC supplier".

"The pandemic year has been a gift to us, allowing my management team to assess the importance of supporting our industry peers and colleagues through collaboration," he said.

The DMC Finder pact sees Luxperia offer access to operators in 13 destinations across Asia, with a single account manager and simplified RFP process to make it easy to source creativity and competitive rates via multiple sources - see dmcfinder.co.uk.

Mask initiative

SYDNEY Props Group is promoting "The Virus Shop," an initiative which aims to keep its staff employed during the COVID-19 pandemic downturn.

Described as a one-stop-shop for businesses to buy a range of essentials to protect staff and customers, the company is now selling a range of colourful printed face masks in a variety of designs - more details at thevirusshop.com.au.

NSW events grants

THE NSW Government has announced details of the \$200,000 NSW Seniors Festival Grants Program, giving up to \$10,000 to local councils, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations to engage seniors in COVID-safe programs and activities during the NSW Seniors Festival from 13-21 Apr.

The grants program is now accepting applications through until 04 Feb - **CLICK HERE**.

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THE operators of the Graceland venue in Memphis, Tennessee have joined the rest of the sector in pivoting to virtual sources of income, last week launching live online tours of the former home of Elvis Presley.

Costing US\$100 - actually \$25 more than the normal admission charge for an in-person visit to the shrine - there are now three special virtual walkthroughs planned over the next few months.

"We know that Elvis is a worldwide name, but we also know that there are people who will never make it to the United States, even pre-pandemic," said a spokesperson for Graceland Archives and Exhibits.

"This is an opportunity for people who aren't travelling at this time, but also for people who will never be able to make it to Memphis and Graceland."

International visitors normally make up about 20% of guests at the venue, but "our international visitorship right now is, obviously, zero," the spokesperson added.

The virtual tours will include the King's mansion, the Lisa Marie jet and exhibits throughout the complex, with each taking two hours and presented live through a private Facebook event archived for 72 hours.

Digital awards

THE efforts of event organisers who have pivoted to a new virtual world through the pandemic will be recognised at the upcoming inaugural Digital Event Awards.

The UK-based awards are an initiative of *Digital Event News* magazine, which was recently launched by Mash Media, the publishers of British trade magazines *Exhibition World* and *Conference News*.

ICC Sydney Director of Audio Visual Services Brian Nash is one of the eminent judges for the awards, with entries closing on 29 Jan.

The awards will be free to attend online, taking place in Mar this year - see digitaleventawards.com.

IMEX off again

IMEX Frankfurt 2021 has been cancelled, with organisers saying they don't believe the industry recovery will sufficiently support the 25-27 May event.

IMEX Group CEO Carina Bauer said "we know the timing of our announcement comes as a blow so early in 2021...we still believe wholeheartedly that a resurgence will come, but sadly we do not believe it will happen in time to deliver a strong and successful event in May."

Catch up on the news of the week

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

NEW TRAVTRADE PLATFORM

TRAVTRADE, the Australian firm which has for some years powered the online "media rooms" for major events staged by Tourism Australia, Brand USA and Destination Canada has launched a new Virtual Trade Event Platform for Destinations.

The system comprises a white-label event website and content management system allowing organisers to generate communications, manage registrations and track the event.

It also integrates with the rich online press release library operated by parent company TravMedia, which has over two decades of content.

"The global pandemic commanded change, and we had to adapt quickly," said the

group's CEO Nick Wayland. "The world's largest travel trade shows cancelled, and international borders closed with a significant impact on tourism.

"Our innovation team developed the white-label virtual trade platform to keep the industry connected and engaged with overseas destinations," he said.

The platform has already successfully powered TravMedia's own International Media Marketplace (IMM) online events in France, Australia and Asia, while IMM Virtual North America will take place later this month with over 250 brands and 330 media - more details at travtrade.com.

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