



EAAA hails NSW ruling

EXHIBITIONS in NSW are able to restart effectively immediately, after clarification of COVID-19 rules from the state Health Department confirmed the lifting of capacity limits.

The updated Public Health Order for Gathering and Movement allows all venues with a COVID-19 safety plan to operate to full capacity, subject to one person per 4 sqm.

However conferences remain subject to existing limits of 300 persons per event.

The Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EAAA) welcomed the update, with CEO Claudia Sagripanti saying the permission for exhibitions to proceed provides “critical momentum towards re-energising the business events industry”.

Vic opens up

HOSPITALITY venues in Vic will be able to host 100 patrons indoors (subject to the 4 sqm rule) and 200 outdoors (subject to the 2 sqm rule) from 22 Nov, as the state’s strict COVID-19 lockdown moves to its final stage of easing.

The boundary between Melbourne and regional parts of the state has been removed, as well as the 25km travel limit.

Currently venues within Vic such as galleries, museums and movie theatres are able to open with a 20 person maximum, with further announcements on events expected in the coming days.

TA GIVES EVENT BOOST

A TOTAL of 86 organisations across Australia will receive funding under the Tourism Australia Business Events Boost Program (**BEN** 15 Sep), with the successful applicants confirmed last week.

Almost 190 applications were received for the scheme which offered a total of \$1.5 million for industry-led marketing and distribution initiatives.

Tourism Australia Executive GM Events, Penny Lion, said “the calibre of ideas submitted through the program application process was impressive,” with her team having had the challenging job of selecting which projects would receive support.

She said successful applicants represented a range of cities and regional destinations, venues and key business events products and experiences.

“The funding will assist with innovative programs and activities including the development of digital assets including video and stills content creation, virtual site inspections, digital marketing and social media campaigns targeting corporate decision makers, event planners and

media,” Lion said.

All supported activity under the program must be completed by 30 Jun 2021.

Lion also confirmed Tourism Australia was set to shortly announce details of a domestic market campaign to help motivate corporate and association decision makers to host a business event, as an evolution of the Event Here This Year promotion which debuted as part of bushfire recovery efforts (**BEN** 11 Feb).

Key messages will promote the value of face-to-face connection and encourage businesses to hold events and enjoy Australia’s world-class offerings while international borders remain closed.

BESydney keeps 70% of meetings

BUSINESS Events Sydney (BESydney) has successfully retained 70% of COVID-19 impacted meetings, which have been rescheduled into future years.

The coup was revealed at the organisation’s AGM last week, with BESydney Chair Bruce Baird saying an “evolving and pragmatic approach” had ensured it was well positioned for the future

and maintaining an active focus on long-lead business as markets return.

Baird said that in 2019/20 BESydney had secured 49 new global meetings worth an estimated \$167m in direct spending for NSW.

Despite the significant impacts of COVID-19, there are now 85 meetings and incentives confirmed from Sydney from 2021 to 2026.

GCCEC on track

THE Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) last month hosted thousands of delegates in a series of events, with strong confidence in the return of face-to-face gatherings.

Oct events at the GCCEC included conferences, school formals, an exhibition, awards business meetings and a 250-guest fundraising lunch, all operating under the venue’s COVID Safe Plan.

Today’s issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.



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WE ALL know events just can't be conducted as normal this year - and that apparently even applies to violent demonstrations in Iran.

This year, for the first time in 40 years, the country's traditional Student Day march will not take place due to COVID-19 concerns.

But fear not - organisers have come up with some tips for participants to mark the anniversary of the seizure of the US Embassy in 1979, including instructions on how to safely burn flags at home.

The Acting Head of the Student Basij Organization announced details of the campaign on TV last week, saying that parents and their children should come together to "trample on and set fire" to flags of the US, Israel & France in their yards.

The fun family activity is complemented by a "Why Down with the USA" website where protestors can upload videos, drawings, voice recordings and video clips with the theme "Why the US must exit the Middle East".



THE Conference Shop and Minor Hotels last week hosted what is hopefully the start of the "new normal" in the form of a COVID-safe familiarisation trip to the NSW Hunter Valley.

Attendees enjoyed a Champagne golf experience and buggy tour of the Cypress Lakes Resort, as well as dinner at the Oak & Vine Restaurant, a garden tour at Elysia, a visit to Draytons Wines and even a spectacular early morning hot air ballooning experience courtesy of Balloons Aloft.

The trip was organised by The Conference Shop Director Carla Offord, who said "it was wonderful to see our clients in real life after such a long time in lockdown".

"Most of the clients had not

been to property so it was great for them to see it in person as opposed to on a screen... business events has always been a relationship-based industry so it was heartening to get back out there and reconnect in person," she said.

Minor Hotels MICE ANZ National Sales Manager Ben Greenwood said he was delighted to be able to host the group of corporate event bookers once again, showcasing the Hunter Valley region's diverse offerings.

Pictured after going aloft are, from left: Susan Crosse, Natalie Kennefick, Carla Offord, Angelica Ortolani, Maddie Dimech, Sophie Wood, Chris Offord, Natalie Meredith, Mary Dimech and Ben Greenwood.

Perth planner

BUSINESS Events Perth has launched a new interactive event planner to encourage business events to WA.

The move comes as the state prepares to transition to a "controlled border" in less than two weeks, with the new online tool taking prospective event organisers on a guided tour of Western Australia's unique meeting spaces, accommodation, gala function spaces and experiences.

Users are able to take a "choose your own adventure" style journey through the state, with the platform also including a tour of Perth premium hotels and event venues - for more info see bepert Hassociation.com.

ICCA appoints

DATO' Sri Khani, CEO of the Malaysia Convention Bureau (MyCEB) has been named as the 2020 Asia Pacific representative for the International Congress and Convention and Association (ICCA) Board of Directors.

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