



**Media Release – For immediate release**

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## **Waiting for Viagogo – industry calls for ticket reseller to front up**

For an online platform that has the tech savvy to re-sell tickets that haven't even been released to their purchasers\*, Viagogo seems strangely incapable of responding to an email or three.

Evelyn Richardson, Chief Executive of Live Performance Australia, has tried three times to make contact with Viagogo to discuss its resumption of paid search advertising on Google.

"The only Australian point of contact is a lobbyist who doesn't seem to be able to say much more than our message has been passed along.

"He can't even tell us who runs the company in Australia - if indeed they have any local presence at all beyond their PR rep.

"In the same time that we've been trying to contact Viagogo, we've had productive engagement with both Google and the ACCC to raise our concerns.

"This included a meeting with Google's public policy team in Australia which was a valuable opportunity for us to raise the industry's concerns about their decision which was made globally to allow Viagogo to resume its advertising through Google's paid search," Ms Richardson said.

While Viagogo didn't seem able or willing to engage directly with the Australian live performance industry, it's global managing director did somehow emerge from an undisclosed location to make a number of unfounded claims to the media.

"Viagogo's failure to respond to our requests seems to be consistent with a pattern of behaviour that is contemptuous of our industry, governments and consumers.

"If Viagogo can't respond to questions on behalf of the Australian live performance industry, how can consumers have any confidence in the credibility of a business which has previously been taken to court by the ACCC for its misleading and deceptive conduct?

"We call on Viagogo to come out from behind its PR rep and media comments and meet with the Australian live performance industry. We have a number of important questions we'd like some answers to, including how they will ensure consumers have a clear pathway to timely resolution of ticketing issues and refunds", Ms Richardson said.

*\* The Mercury newspaper reported on 11 December that organisers of the Dark Mofo festival had cautioned people against buying tickets from Viagogo for Bon Iver's performances at the event next year: "Dark Mofo creative director Leigh Carmichael this morning said legitimate tickets would not be distributed until days before the event. "It's come to our attention that Dark Mofo Bon Iver tickets are for sale on the Viagogo website at a 257 percent mark-up," he said. "We strongly advise our audience not to buy tickets from Viagogo or any other third party. "No tickets have been created or sent yet, they are sent three days before the performance. This is designed to thwart scalpers."*

**ENDS**



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### **About LPA**

LPA is the peak body for Australia's live performance industry. Established over 100 years ago in 1917 and registered as an employers' organisation under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009*, LPA has over 400 Members nationally. We represent commercial producers, music promoters, major performing arts companies, small to medium companies, independent producers, major performing arts centres, metropolitan and regional venues, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas, arts festivals, music festivals, and service providers such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers. Our membership spans from small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities.

LPA has a clear mandate to advocate for and support policy decisions that benefit the sustainability and growth of the live performance industry in Australia.