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LPA calls for targeted JobSaver action as snap lockdowns, border closures and audience restrictions smash industry recovery

- 90 percent of live entertainment companies are still receiving JobKeeper in January-March 2021 quarter
- Only 2 percent of live entertainment companies expect to return to 81-100 percent pre-COVID business activity in 2021; 10 percent in 2022; 40 percent in 2023; 62 percent in 2024; and 68 percent from 2025 onwards
- Almost 50 percent of companies expect to operate at 0-40 percent of pre-COVID business activity and revenue in 2021
- Continued snap lock-downs, state and international border closures and audience restrictions prevent industry fully reactivating with a return to business normality a long way off; industry is looking to 2022 with a long tail into 2023 and beyond
- Without a targeted wage subsidy, 33 percent of live entertainment companies will make staff redundant; 20 percent will continue to keep staff stood down; 17 percent will reduce hours of staff working full/part time hours; 13 percent will wind up their business; and 51 percent will cut operational costs even further

Live Performance Australia (LPA), the arts and entertainment industry peak body, today called on the Morrison government to provide targeted industry support to prevent the further collapse of an industry on life support.

LPA Chief Executive Evelyn Richardson said the live entertainment industry continued to be smashed by repeated snap lockdowns, state and international border closures, audience caps and the lack of a national framework for touring productions.

LPA's latest industry survey shows 90 percent of live entertainment companies are still receiving JobKeeper in the January to March 2021 quarter. Of those companies, only 2 percent project a return to 81-100 percent pre-COVID business activity this year and almost 50 percent expect to operate at 0-40 percent business activity in 2021.

"Like tourism and hospitality, the pandemic has had a devastating impact on live entertainment with an estimated \$24 billion of lost economic output and \$11 billion lost in industry value. We've also seen 79 000 (65%) jobs lost, which is around two thirds of our work force.

"The industry has been working hard to get our people back to work, on stage and touring. Australia has made great progress in fighting the virus and we are now slowly reopening businesses, venues and live events. JobKeeper, the Creative Economy package and state-based government support have been critical in keeping companies alive and people in jobs.

"While across the economy, the ATO reports that 90 percent of the 1.3 million jobs lost have been replaced, our industry is not in those figures. Live entertainment remains largely at a standstill. We're slowly getting shows back but under heavy restrictions and current business activity is not sustainable. The looming end of JobKeeper will see significant job losses and an unprecedented down-sizing of the industry. The impact of that on our cities and regional communities will be profound.



“We face major challenges in fully reactivating and a return to business normality remains a long way off. For our industry to operate profitably we need our venues operating at full capacity, unrestricted interstate movement, and open international borders without extensive quarantine. Due to essential health considerations, we don’t see these three necessary conditions coming into play in the next six to nine months.

“Since November last year we have had every major musical, theatre production and arts festival shut down or significantly disrupted due to a snap lock down and border closures – this has happened in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth, Adelaide and Melbourne. The financial costs and damage to consumer confidence across the country is enormous. We are also very concerned about the growing loss of skills as we stare at the reality of treading water until early 2022.

“If we are to play our part in Australia’s economic and social recovery, we need targeted government support to save jobs and companies beyond March. Our survival depends on it”, Ms Richardson said.

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About LPA

Live Performance Australia (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.