



Media Release – For Immediate Release

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LPA calls for emergency Business Interruption Fund after government directive shuts down Bluesfest

Live Performance Australia (LPA), the arts and entertainment industry peak body, today again called on Federal and State governments to urgently establish a live entertainment Business Interruption Fund.

LPA Chief Executive Evelyn Richardson said the live entertainment industry could not sustain continued hit and runs as the industry reels from the cancellation of Bluesfest and Brisbane's sudden lock-down.

"One case of community transmission has shut down a major regional event with a \$10 million plus loss that will destroy a business with a thirty-year trading history owned by someone who is risking everything to run his event in a Covid safe manner.

"LPA has been calling for a Business Interruption Fund since last year. This is now a matter of urgency. It should be top of the agenda at the next National Cabinet meeting on 9 April.

"This has cost hundreds of jobs, musicians who were about to perform their first gig in a year have been shut down, thousands of people who were attending the seated, CovidSafe approved event have been turned away, and the local regional economy has been severely impacted.

"We call on the NSW Government to step up and provide support to Bluesfest to ensure it survives a second shut down due to public health directives.

"This is irrefutable proof that a business interruption fund is critical to the survival of live entertainment events in an environment where no promoter or producer can get insurance.

"This is a watershed moment. Our industry has worked with all governments to get our people back to work, our shows back on stage and touring. However, continued snap lockdowns and border restrictions are killing consumer and industry confidence. We have been shut down for a year. We can't survive the next six to twelve months without some form of insurance.

"We are not privy to the health advice, however we are an industry, like others, trying to get back on our feet and get our people back to work.

"At which point do we move to living with Covid? Our industry is getting theatre shows back on stage while we look to October to kick start our live music sector. We need certainty that we're not going to be shut down and that our governments can respond and manage community transmission.

"We all know that Covid is with us for a long time so we need to reframe the national narrative around this.

"We are also very concerned about the vaccine rollout which appears to have stalled. Urgent attention needs to be given to ramping up the rollout nationally. It's time for a military style operation so we can avoid closures like this in the future", Ms Richardson said.

ENDS



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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.