



Live music and entertainment industry calls on Morrison Government and states to urgently deliver insurance scheme as new Omicron variant threatens recovery

Today the united live music and entertainment industry bodies AAM, AFA, ALMBC, AMIN, APRA AMCOS, ARIA, PPCA and Live Performance Australia again call on Prime Minister Scott Morrison, State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers to urgently deliver a government-backed insurance scheme, as the emergence of the new Omicron COVID-19 variant has the industry on high alert.

The emergence of this new variant on the heels of Delta and the rapid global response to limit its spread is a salutary reminder that this is not over yet. For an industry getting back on its feet, investing nationally and working hard to get shows back on stage and touring, the ongoing threat of future business disruption is very real.

It takes months for industry to manage, coordinate and deliver events that tour both regionally and nationally. Thousands of businesses, sole traders and artists are at the mercy of new strains and the ongoing threat of more government lockdowns and reimposition of restrictions.

A recently announced Victorian insurance scheme was welcomed by industry following ongoing calls for a commercial solution to provide certainty to commence planning for 2022-23. The announcement of the Victorian scheme follows similar government-backed insurance and business interruption funds established for the live music and entertainment sectors, most recently in New Zealand but also in the UK, Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and Estonia. There is also a precedent in Australia with the TIF provided to the screen industry which has supported ongoing investment in production.

For this scheme to truly work, however, the industry urged the Prime Minister to develop a national scheme that reflects the industry's national economic and employment footprint. We again call on the Federal Government to step up and co-ordinate a co-contribution scheme shared with the states and territories.

The Australian live music and entertainment sector has long argued that a government-backed insurance scheme is crucial to allowing the sector to rebuild, maintain employment and rapidly restore its critical economic and cultural contribution to the nation.

Live Music and Entertainment is at the core of how our nation comes together – whether at the local pub or our biggest stadiums – a key driver of many other sectors and the heart and soul of great hospitality, travel and tourism experiences. It is essential that the Live Music and Entertainment industry does not lose its capacity to operate due to any future venue capacity or border restrictions.

Protecting our industry assets and skills base is critical to ensuring we play our part in maintaining employment and bringing back economic and social benefits to our cities and regions. The industry calls on all levels of government to come together and establish a partnership approach with industry, delivering a government-backed insurance scheme and ongoing support.

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