



Media Release – For Immediate Release

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## Budget falls short in supporting arts and entertainment industry rebuild

Live Performance Australia (LPA), the arts and entertainment industry peak body, said the Budget announced tonight falls well short in supporting the industry rebuild post Covid.

LPA Chief Executive Evelyn Richardson said the live arts and entertainment industry is focused on rebuilding as quickly as it can but faces significant challenges.

“Like everyone, the live performance industry is learning to ‘live’ with Covid. We’re getting back to business in 2022, so that we can do what we do best – entertain Australians with live events.

‘We’re grateful for the significant support the Government has provided during the depths of the pandemic through programs such as RISE, but we now face a new set of challenges as we rebuild and which require targeted measures to deal with ongoing COVID impacts, including further disruption due to infection and isolation and a critical skills shortage.

“Before Covid, our industry was a vast ecosystem of small, medium and large businesses, sole operators and tens of thousands of performers, artists, creatives and technical crew.

“The industry lost \$1.4 billion in revenue in 2020, with significant losses in 2021 when our two major markets were locked down. We’ve also lost thousands of people across the industry and now face a severe skill and labour shortage, the worst ever experienced by the industry in living memory.

“LPA is calling for support to drive investment and rebuild skills and capacity in the arts and entertainment industry. The current skills shortage is gripping Australian businesses nationally. We are not alone. There needs to be a much greater focus on skills and training with a package that enables industry to provide both traineeships to address critical skills shortages, and short courses for retraining established technicians.

“We also urgently need to drive investment back into the industry through extended tax incentives, similar to those provided to the screen industry. The investment pipeline has been massively disrupted and we are competing globally for future investment, against markets that offer significant tax incentives, notably the UK and US.

“We again call on the Commonwealth Government to step up and establish a temporary Live Entertainment Events Insurance Scheme, similar to the scheme made available to the screen industry. Ongoing disruption due to infection and isolation of personnel remains a very real challenge.

“We were disappointed the Budget does not provide more targeted support for those industries trying to rebuild after being disproportionately impacted by Covid.

“Australia needs a vibrant arts and entertainment industry to contribute to our economic recovery and drive social and cultural wellbeing – at a time when it’s never been needed more.

“Live entertainment events drive visitation across regions and cities, pumping billions of dollars of spending into the economy. Our industry contributed \$36.5 billion to Australia’s economy in 2019 and is a key driver of many other sectors, notably hospitality, travel and cultural tourism.

“Targeted support to rebuild skills, and to underwrite and attract investment will enable us to create jobs, get our people back to work, more shows back on stage, our touring networks re-established, and our audiences



back to live events. This will support not just our artists and industry, but all the associated upstream and downstream businesses which depend upon live events as stimulus”, 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 350 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.