

## Visit Victoria responses to the *Inquiry into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism and events sectors*

Questions taken on notice:

### 1. A breakdown of the regional visitation statistics, as per page 3 of the transcript.

for Overnight Visitors ('000)	International (Overnight)		Domestic overnight		Total (Overnight only)	
	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Melbourne	2,967	578	11,435	3,543	14,403	4,121
Great Ocean Road	243	57	2,776	1,604	3,019	1,660
Murray	61	10	2,642	1,449	2,703	1,459
Goldfields	56	8	2,281	1,050	2,337	1,057
Gippsland	86	15	2,212	1,728	2,298	1,744
Peninsula	73	18	2,085	1,269	2,158	1,287
High Country	33	np	2,075	835	2,108	841
Geelong and the Bellarine	63	16	1,669	936	1,732	953
Yarra Valley & Dandenong Ranges	65	14	1,158	559	1,223	573
Grampians	57	16	1,108	674	1,165	690
Phillip Island	57	15	1,084	585	1,141	601
Daylesford and Macedon Ranges	20	np	908	374	928	380

Source: Tourism Research Australia, National Visitor Survey, Calendar years (CY) of 2019 and 2020. np – not publishable threshold due to low sample size. 2019 CY shows pre-COVID-19 visitation, CY 2020 shows COVID-19 and bushfire impacts. Regions sorted by total overnight visitation for 2019.

### 2. Estimates of the leverage received from major and business events that are staged, and the impact that that has on tourism, as per page 5 of the transcript.

#### Major Events

A Visit Victoria commissioned study by leading consultants Ernst & Young into the impacts of major events to the Victorian economy in 2018 found that major events attracted almost 6.9 million international and interstate visitors to Victoria. The report also found major events contributed \$2.53 billion to the economy in 2018.

#### Business Events

According to the Melbourne Convention Delegate study in 2013, more than 70 per cent of international delegates visiting Melbourne for International Association conferences were first time visitors to Australia. 28 per cent travelled to Melbourne with people who did not attend the

conference. 38 per cent undertook pre and/or post conference travel to regional Victoria. Delegates stayed in Melbourne for 5.8 nights while attending a conference and 6.5 nights in Melbourne overall. On average, international delegates stayed in Australia for 8.3 nights, representing an additional 2.5 nights of travel pre/ post the conference. 95 per cent of international delegates visiting Melbourne for an International Incentive (employee reward) program travelled to regional Victoria.

48 per cent of interstate delegates would not have visited Melbourne in the next 12 to 18 months if they were not attending a conference in the city. 17 per cent were accompanied on their trip to Melbourne to attend a conference. The average number of accompanying visitors was 1.5 and 28 per cent undertook pre and/or post conference travel to regional Victoria.

*Source: Melbourne Convention Delegate Study 2013*

**In addition, the Committee would appreciate any information you are able to provide on the following matters:**

**3. What support do you think is needed to ensure the future of the Victorian events sector?**

MCB welcomed the 2021/22 Victorian Budget which included \$42.913 million over four years to support MCB and Business Events Victoria acquire future business events for the state.

It represents a strong commitment to long-term investment in the sector and the investment recognises the essential role business events play in the Victorian visitor economy, and their contributions to innovation, job creation, trade and investment opportunities.

For major events, in 2020 the Victorian Government provided a \$152 million boost for the Major Events Fund over four years. This significant boost ensures Victoria can continue to attract international major events and retain our title as the events capital of Australia. The Regional Events Fund was also renewed with \$20 million over four years (announced in 2020).

This continued long-term investment by the Victorian Government will help to ensure the future of the Victorian events sector.

**4. Noting the number of State and Federal support programs and measures that have been implemented for various aspects of the tourism and events industries, are you aware of any particular areas within these sectors that have been significantly impacted but which have not received government support?**

Visit Victoria notes there are a range of financial support packages offered by the state and federal governments.

Most recently, on Sunday 6 June 2021, the Victorian Government announced a \$32.2 million Regional Tourism Support Package to provide a further 80,000 regional travel vouchers. It will also provide accommodation, attraction and experience providers with grant top-ups worth up to \$4,500 per business, while alpine businesses will receive up to \$15,000 to help them provide a COVIDSafe ski season. Visit Victoria is strongly supportive of the travel voucher program as it helps to drive and disperse visitors across the state, injecting millions into local economies.

In addition, on Sunday 30 May 2021, the Victorian Government announced a \$250.7 million Circuit Breaker Business Support Package to help up to 90,000 Victorian businesses that have been affected by the latest restrictions. The package features three initiatives for small to medium-sized businesses and sole traders. Importantly for our industry, this package includes \$20 million to support operators in the events industry who have incurred losses due to the restrictions. On Wednesday, 2 June, the Victorian Government announced a further \$209 million in grants to provide financial support for businesses, bringing to the total support package to \$460 million.

The Federal Government has recently announced a financial support package, where eligible people in greater Melbourne who have lost work as a result of the lockdown (longer than seven days) will receive a payment of either \$500 or \$325. The person has to be able to prove their lost income, cannot have access to sick leave, must have less than \$10,000 in savings, and cannot be receiving any welfare support such as JobSeeker or the Parenting Payment.

#### **4. Do you have any relevant evidence or data on the success to date of COVID-19 recovery campaigns such as Click for Vic, Stay close, go further, and Visit Melbourne?**

As per Visit Victoria's submission, this section outlines relevant data on Visit Victoria's campaigns:

##### **CLICK FOR VIC**

Campaign tracking – independent market research agency Hall & Partners, commissioned on behalf of Visit Victoria. Cumulative tracking from October to December 2020.

- a. 48 per cent campaign recognition among Victorians.
- b. 87 per cent of those exposed to the campaign said it was clearly a Victorian campaign – the highest ever result for Visit Victoria.
- c. 89 per cent of campaign recognisers stated they are more likely to consider purchasing Victorian products as a result of seeing the campaign.
- d. 51 per cent of Victorians said: "It gives me a sense that I can help the Victorian economy and businesses".
- e. 25 per cent of Victorians made a purchase related action as a result of seeing the campaign. f) 72 per cent of Victorians said: "An initiative of this nature makes me look forward to visiting and exploring regional Victoria once it is safe to do so".
- f. 49 per cent of regional Victorians said: "An initiative of this nature makes me look forward to visiting Melbourne once it is safe to do so".
- g. Visitvictoria.com received the most traffic ever for a single day on the campaign launch date on 23 August 2020 (70,000 visits).
- h. More than 600,000 website leads have been driven to the more than 470 operators featured on the Visit Victoria website 'Click for Vic' campaign hub.
- i. 29,391 #clickforvic hashtags used by consumers and industry (target 24,000).
- j. 'Click for Vic' has achieved more than \$2,300,000 in PR value (Advertising Value Equivalency).
- k. The #clickforvic hashtag has seen more than 23,000 uses across social media, primarily used by businesses to leverage the campaign and showcase their wares to Victorian consumers.

##### **STAY CLOSE, GO FURTHER**

Campaign tracking - independent market research agency Hall & Partners, commissioned on behalf of Visit Victoria. Cumulative tracking from November to December 2020.

- a. 47 per cent of the target audience recalled seeing the advertising (target 40 per cent).

- b. 36 per cent of the target audience undertook at least one travel related action as a result of seeing the campaign (target 20 per cent).
- c. 79 per cent of the target audience were more likely to consider visiting regional Victoria in the next 12 months as a result of seeing the campaign.
- d. The campaign has made more than 23.7 million social media impressions. 1.1 million completed views of the films on social media.
- e. More than 2.65 million visits to the visitvictoria.com website.
- f. The campaign has achieved more than \$8,900,000 in PR value (Advertising Value Equivalency).

### **VISIT MELBOURNE**

Campaign tracking - independent market research agency Lewers, commissioned on behalf of Visit Victoria. Cumulative tracking from February to April.

- a. 56 per cent of those exposed to the campaign said they were more likely to consider visiting Melbourne and its surrounds.
- b. 51 per cent of those exposed to the advertisements said they were clearly for Melbourne and its surrounds.
- c. Those exposed to the campaign are more likely to: i. Feel positive about traveling to Melbourne and within Victoria. ii. Believe their overall experience will be like what they would have expected pre-COVID.