

Inquiry into the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism and Events Sectors

Mr Peter Marko

Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Please help my industry {Events Industry} as my livelihood is in peril.

I would like to enlighten you to the dire situation myself and my colleagues in the Event Industry are facing, with the ending of government support through job keeper payments, and to ask for your attention and help.

Please let me assure you this is dire, this is genuine, I am not trying in any way to take advantage of government handouts, or its commitment to keeping the economy turning over and repairing, through financial support to our industry, THE EVENT INDUSTRY. I am, and all the professional employees and employers of the event industry are facing termination and close down of companies, as the industry crumbles under the disruption, and halting of events, caused by regulations imposed due to the Covid19 Pandemic.

I work for a lighting company Phaseshift Productions, in the position of Head Electronics Repair Technician. <http://www.phaseshiftproductions.com/about> We supply the events industry {live music, comedy, theatre, Sports, corporate, festivals, movie, schools, owner operators, general public etc}, with all their lighting needs. It is a very specialized industry. This includes; the equipment ,Technicians, Repair Technicians, Lighting Directors, Programmers, Systems Engineers, Production Managers, Truck Drivers, Riggers and Loaders.

I personally work on state of the art intelligent lighting fixtures, their control equipment and all the electronic and mechanical infrastructure needed to keep them running. They are basically specialized computers which produce all the visually stunning lighting effects you see every time you go to a live concert, or gallery, or theatre, or festival, or sporting event, or Comedy, or corporate event, or product launch, or public event.

Just a few examples of the hundreds of these events which we participate each year in normal (pre Covid) times are:

Anzac day march, Dream Time At The G, A.F.L. Grand final, Speigal Tent, Melbourne Art Gallery, StKilda Festival, Day On The Green, Comedy Festival, Melbourne art centre, The MCEC. Major community and music festivals.

Examples of some of the musical acts and comedians that we have provided all the lighting, which you may have been lucky enough to see:

Liza Minnelli, Harry Connick Jr, Devo, Paul Kelly, The Wiggles, Ross Noble, Bill Bailey, Tim Minchin, Status Quo, Deep Purple, Joan Armatrading, Kenny Rodgers, Joe Cocker, Midnight Oil, River Dance, Mrs Browns boys, Imagine Dragons, The Rubans, Killing Heidi, The living End, Shanon Noll, Cyndi lauper, just to name a few. Very importantly we also supply lighting and crew, to up and coming acts, enabling them to get "a foot in the door" and hopefully helping them to become successful artists and businesses, contributing to our industry, and the economy, as well as giving people pleasure through their ability as artists, and their gift of music.

I have worked in this industry for 37 years.

All in our industry are, Qualified, and trained Professional people. We have very specialized jobs and many of us have gained very specialized knowledge over many years in the industry, This knowledge can only be gained through years of work and practice in our fields, and is passed on to younger job seekers who are looking to a career in our industry themselves.

Lighting is just one aspect of our industry. There is also Audio, supplying all the Public Address systems , Speakers, Monitors, Audio technicians, including front of house sound operators and fold back operators, riggers, system technicians, repair technicians etc, to which all the above mentioned also applies. Then there are staging companies, and companies that supply all the other infrastructure, seating, catering, video screens, flooring tents, pergolas, pavilions, security, it goes on and on. All very dedicated and hard working people, who are an integral part of our work force, and the economy.

We all need your help! The Live Event industry is surviving only, due to job keeper payments we are all receiving from the federal government. This has been a terrible struggle for us all and many have been already forced to leave the industry, because they cannot support their families on the \$500 job keeper payments. Many of us have been taken from full time, to part time employment, as a last ditch effort to save the companies for which we work. Many businesses have already shut their doors, and closed down, because up until now there has been no work for their companies since MARCH 2020, Until Live Events return enough to support the industry, hopefully later this year with the roll out of the various Covid19 vaccines, we need continued support from the government.

Victoria's event industry contributes over 10 billion dollars a year to the economy and over 23 billion nationally, We only need financial support for a few more months, until the industry picks up again enough for us to support ourselves. It would be a terrible blow to the economy if we were left to collapse, especially after the vast amounts of money already given in support through job keeper to keep our industry alive until now. We are 80% through this terrible pandemic, and can see the light at the end, and with just a few more months of financial help from you , the event industry will survive and once again become a driving force of our economy ,providing job security for tens of thousands of Victorians, and bringing joy and pleasure back to all in all its forms

Victoria has a reputation for its Live music, Sport, entertainment and festivals second to none world wide, and the event industry just in Victoria generates over 10 billion dollars a year. Please help to stop us all from loosing this.

We desperately need help and support.

From the State Government; Daniel Andrews, we desperately need;

Real financial support for our industry. Late last year the Tasmanian government gave grants of up to \$100,000 to event industry businesses - and especially to suppliers - to help them to survive and to be able to gear up again to start working: <https://smallbusinessconnections.com.au/tasmania-announces-2-5m-small-business-grants-for-events-industry/>

Much greater certainty about border closures - as so many events need people to be able to travel with some certainty.

Proper guidelines and an improved approval process for all types of events.

For the Victorian government to actively support events and to help get them happening again.

From the Federal Government; Scott Morrison, we desperately need

JobKeeper to be extended beyond March. Or, for it to be replaced with another measure that will give similar support for workers in the Event Industry.

A national approach to borders closures - as many events need people to be able to travel with more confidence.

Real financial support for events to get more events happening again. And particularly, to help deal with the risks and costs of sudden cancellations.

Below are the results of a survey taken by Save Victorian Events. savevictorianevents.com.au

Final Survey Results: The Devastating Impact on Victoria's \$10+ billion Event Industry **IMPACT ON VICTORIAN EVENT INDUSTRY COMPANIES** By companies we mean event organisers and the vast array of suppliers to Victoria's event industry such as: AV, audio, lighting, theming, expo, marquees, catering, etc... Income from April to December 2020 was down 85% Forecast income for January to June 2021 is down 76% Forecast income for July to December 2021 is down 67% (compared to the same period in pre-Covid years and excluding government support) 94% of companies are currently receiving JobKeeper

Receiving JobKeeper has enabled: 38% of companies to keep all staff on 47% of companies to keep some staff on If JobKeeper ends in March: 43% of companies will need to let staff go An additional 40% of companies will potentially need to close their business So 83% of companies in Victoria's event industry will be severely affected by the ending of JobKeeper - if it is not replaced by some other form of financial support. **IMPACT ON FREELANCERS AND CONTRACTORS** These are the highly skilled professional service providers such as producers, production managers, stage managers, technicians, risk managers, lighting designers, etc.... who play such a critical role in the planning and running of events. Their income from April to December 2020 was down 89% Forecast income for January to June 2021 is down 80% Forecast income for July to December 2021 is down 67% (compared to the same period in pre-Covid years and excluding government support) 77% have had to seek work outside of the Event Industry to survive. 69% will need to get jobs outside of the Event Industry if JobKeeper ends in March. **IMPACT ON VICTORIAN EVENT INDUSTRY WORKERS** Only 27% of people who were working full time in the Victoria's Event Industry pre-Covid are still working full time in the Event Industry. 35% of people who were working in Victoria's Event Industry pre-Covid are no longer working in the Event Industry at all. The survey was conducted by Save Victorian Events from February 3rd to 7th with more than 360 businesses and more than 200 individuals from Victoria's Event Industry responding. Contact: help@savevictorianevents.com.au

This is a link to Bill Shorten asking Parliament to help the Victorian events industry; .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3d5V-UTfWT8>

Please understand the devastating circumstances ahead for the event industry, and all those involved and employed by it. We need help and support now, for the of thousands people and all the companies that create it. Please please help us, so that we may keep our lively hoods, and so the public and everyone may continue to experience the joy, that live entertainment in all its forms brings in the future.

Yours most sincerely

Peter Marko
Repair Technician
Phaseshift Productions

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

www.phaseshiftproductions.com

Melbourne - Head Office
39 Taunton Drive
Cheltenham, Victoria 3192
Australia
T: +61 3 8586 – 3444
F: +61 3 9584 – 3319

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:



Signature:

P.Marko