

23 July 2021

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP
NSW Premier
52 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000

CC: The Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP; The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP; The Hon. Victor Dominello MP; The Hon. Stuart Ayres MP; The Hon. Damien Tudehope MP; The Hon. Don Harwin MLC; The Hon. Mark Speakman MP; The Hon. Alex Greenwich MP; The Hon. Chris Minns MP; The Hon. Prue Carr MP; The Hon. John Graham MLC; The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC; The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC; The Hon. Ryan Park MP; The Hon. Yasmin Catley MP; The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Councillor Clover Moore

Dear Premier

Re: Immediate relief for highly impacted industries

We write in furtherance of our letter dated 12 July 2021, after almost four weeks in lockdown with many more to come, seeking more certainty and relief for the highly impacted industries that the Night Time Industries Association (“NTIA”) represents - being the hospitality, performance, arts, culture and the supply chain.

We have spoken with many of our stakeholders and it is clear that the current uncertainty surrounding the length of the lockdown and the lack of clarity on a road to recovery is damaging to business confidence, consumer confidence and mental health.

The NTIA and its members appreciate the efforts of all NSW Government departments during this challenging time. Whilst we welcome the support packages announced by the NSW and Federal Governments last week, these are insufficient to cover the needs of our industries while in lockdown, leaving many businesses uncertain of the future and others without access to any support. We fear widespread loss of jobs and livelihoods the longer this continues.

Our members operate businesses that have experienced 70% or more decline in turnover due to the Public Health Orders. A support package that is specifically targeted at these businesses is needed.

The current qualifying criteria of aggregated turnover for the Business Grant and JobSaver schemes has left many large employers without any support from the Government, despite being closed down. A wage subsidy scheme where employees can engage in work for the subsidy amount retains valued employees in a very tight labour market and allows businesses to rebuild. For many, this lockdown is far worse than last year as the support ecosystem is not nearly as comprehensive.

Beyond survival, our industries also need to start planning for reopening. We need a roadmap for reopening similar to that released by the Victorian Government last year, outlining milestones for easing restrictions based on public health advice and metrics. It is essential that the NSW Government works with industry groups to develop this roadmap, and the NTIA would welcome the opportunity to bring our industry expertise in developing the plan.

Given the critical nature of the industries in lockdown, we ask you to please consider our relief requests and a broader solution to developing a reopening plan for our industries.

1. **Change the qualifying criteria for COVID Business Grants and JobSaver so more businesses that have been closed down.** Using the corporate entity criteria as used for JobKeeper or increasing the aggregated turnover threshold will enable more businesses to survive the lockdown and rebuild on the other side.
2. **Develop a wage subsidy scheme for highly impacted businesses.** This should allow employees to work for the subsidy amount to maintain connection with their employer and allow for rebuild work to be undertaken.
3. **Implement a 6-month suspension of insolvency laws** for Directors from highly impacted industries. A temporary measure so Directors are not exposed to undue risk during lockdown and the initial rebuild phase.
4. **Establish a Taskforce within Government to focus specifically on reopening.** This will ensure a coordinated response across Government, with a purpose distinctly different from the health and economic response. Such a Taskforce could assist with developing the reopening plan and guidelines, reducing red tape and expediting approval processes, whilst ensuring that any investment by Government is maximised.



The NTIA would welcome the opportunity to work with the NSW Government in bringing these recommendations to fruition, particularly the roadmap and guidelines for reopening.

We again ask for your support to enable the night time industries to get through this challenging time, and offer our own support to work collaboratively to achieve this.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JBaker', written in a cursive style.

Justine Baker

Chair, Night Time Industries Association