

NATIONAL MOBILISATION CAMPAIGN

Meeting Structure Speaking Points for Meeting

Context

- To maximise your impact, you need to deliver key facts in an organised, concise way.
- The Federal Member of Parliament you are meeting with meets with many local constituents every week and has an extraordinary volume of information to process as part of Parliamentary duties.
- The most effective meetings are those that provide relevant information from a local perspective and have a clear ask for the MP to act on.
- In addition to providing a clear overview, you need to leave time for questions. Most electorate meetings run for just 30 minutes so being organised is important.

Speaking Points and meeting structure (work on assumption of a 30 minute meeting)

NB: Refer to 'Proposed Local Federal MP Meeting Agenda' for ease of printing

Thanks and quick overview of your business (ie max 2 mins)

Key points you wish to cover 1) The current problems; 2) What we need you to do for us; 3) Questions; 4) Summary

1) The current problems:

- **Travel Agents were the first hit by CV and will be the last to recover**
 - o Suspension of international travel in early March hit us immediately and devastated us financially.
 - o We have essentially been operating with X% of pre-CV income since March. The hit to revenue for most travel agencies is close to 100% year on year and likely to continue like this well into 2021 while international borders remain closed.
 - o *Explain the travel payment ecosystem (refer to 'The Facts Leave Behind Document')*– this means our business cashflows are crushed for up to 6 months after bookings return to a more material volume;
 - o We were a thriving business prior to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
 - o Without tailored support, further job losses and business closures are inevitable including for my business
- **We have been hit harder (or at least as hard as) the sectors which Government has extended additional support too** (construction sector - \$688m; arts and entertainment - \$250m; film and television - \$400m; aviation - \$1.1bn)
- **We are providing invaluable and critical support for our customers (and non-customers) in managing the complicated process of refunds and credits.**

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- Travel agents are managing an estimated \$10bn worth of cancellations and refunds on behalf of an estimated 4 million Australians;
- This is a complex, stressful and lengthy process which is taking much longer than normal due to the pandemic;
- This is \$10bn worth of money which will be reinvested in Australia's economy, businesses and communities including tourism in Australia. These funds represent an enormous stimulus for the Australian economy and the expertise of travel agents is critical to make sure our customers secure maximum value;
- The reality is that consumers are only going to become more exposed and need more help given the inevitable and already foreshadowed collapse of global suppliers including airlines;
- Without businesses like mine, consumers will turn to ACCC and the Fair Trading/Consumer Affairs Departments in each State and Territory – specialised expertise is needed to navigate the individual Terms and Conditions that each supplier has. This is not a role that Government can easily absorb even were there are people available to meet the demand.

2) What we need you to do for us:

- **Support our pre-Budget Submission which calls for a Travel Agent Support Package.** AFTA is calling for a number of support measures for agencies, tour operators and wholesalers that pass financial viability assessment including:
 - i. *Back to Business* grants – scaled grants to all travel agencies, tour operators and travel wholesalers based on TTV in FY19 to help us stay in business, meet some operational costs, and continue the important work of both returning refunds to customers and help them with travel
 - this will be an average grant of \$40,000 per agency however is scaled from \$10,000 to \$100,000 based on TTV
 - ii. *Back to Business* loans – concessional loans of up to \$100,000 per agency outlet which will enable viable businesses to endure the COVID-19 downturn and slow return to profitability.
- **Support our calls to boost Cash Flow via Loss Carry Back** – the reinstatement of previous loss carry-back provisions to allow current year losses to be carried back to FY19 and FY20.
- **Get people travelling again and using travel agents.** As domestic travel resumes and state/territory borders open, not only do we need the Government to encourage people to travel but we need Government and the various Tourism bodies to do everything possible to encourage Australians to book with their local travel agency.
- **Get people travelling again internationally via travel bubbles.** We need the introduction of travel bubbles to allow for medically led lifting of travel

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restrictions to get the right balance between the health of people and the health of the Australian economy.

- **Support our call for the extension of the National Code of Conduct for commercial tenancies.** State and Territory Governments must extend this to 31 March 2021 and any support you can provide is appreciated.
- **Support our call for immediate guarantees of corporate debt covenants until 30 June 2021.** This would support liquidity amongst the larger players in the sector by helping them to bridge COVID-19 disruption to cash flows through the purchase of short-term debt (similar to the UK's COVID Corporate Finance Facility).

Agenda Summary:

- 1) Introduction and overview
- 2) The current problems facing my business and travel agents
- 3) Why my business and travel agents need tailored support
- 4) What we need you to do for us to help my business and travel agencies across Australia survive
- 5) Questions
- 6) Summary