

STATEMENT from WAM COVID-19 – CRITICAL IMPACT ON MUSIC

The music sector in WA and nationwide is in crisis.

Many small businesses and sole traders have seen their income go from a normal earnings situation to zero within 24 hours of Friday's initial ban on mass gatherings. This has worsened throughout this week and people's livelihoods and health and wellbeing is at critical risk.

WAM supports the call by Live Performance Australia and other arts bodies for an industry specific plan and support package and further asks that music is specifically considered in that.

In order to support music businesses, sole traders and organisations WAM asks that the Cultural Ministers of Australia include the following measures in any support package.

- Immediate and ongoing cessation of all government taxes, fees and charges as they apply to music businesses and venues. This includes but is not limited to Land Tax, local government rates and charges, liquor licence fees and utilities charges.
- Instruct banks and other financial institutions to suspend repayments on industry business loans, and mortgages for those experiencing – or likely to experience – hardship.
- Until further notice obligate all radio in Australia to play at least 90% Australian music with limitations on the playing of heritage acts.
- Provide greater national clarity around the projected timeframe for the public health response to coronavirus, including when venues and companies can anticipate preparing to resume operations.
- Expedite and immediate access to income support for industry participants who have lost employment or income due to venue or event closures, including casual workers and sole traders.
- Provide a cash injection to the performing arts sector to enable them to meet cash and reserve shortfalls that will confront them in the next three months.
- Repurpose and bring forward the allocated \$22 million Live Music package to be spent over the next 12 months.

- Direct budget support for the duration of this financial year for all live performance businesses impacted by event and venue closures to enable continuity of their operations and employment levels throughout the shutdown period and to ensure viability for recovery in future.
- Provide additional funding to Support Act to provide crisis support to the sector.
- Funding for the development of new platforms and means to enable performances to be delivered through innovative online or digital platforms.

For comment please contact WAM CEO Mike Harris mike@wam.org.au.



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