



Australian
Chamber of Commerce
and Industry

2020

ANNUAL REPORT
& BUSINESS REVIEW



ACCI Annual Report and Business Review 2020

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This is a year like no other. Natural hardships struck like a succession of plagues. Bushfires tore through small towns and laid landscapes to waste after regional communities had endured years of drought. A pandemic swept the globe and cities, states and nations were locked down.

In these times ACCI has been needed more than ever. Our network rose to the challenge and demonstrated unity of purpose and commitment to collaborate and deliver thought leadership that unlocked full benefits for our members, the employers they represent and the wider business community.

Our members depend on ACCI to be influential and deliver outcomes at the national level; and to be a powerhouse populating the business policy agenda of the government in Canberra.

From Boxing Day, ACCI provided advice and, with our members, practical support for businesses in fire-impacted communities. ACCI was at the table with government from the start. I met with the Prime Minister, and ACCI persuaded government to adopt proposals for low interest loans and other forms of direct support to help businesses back on their feet.

ACCI facilitated direct connections between members and Ministers to speed rescue and recovery. Members came together with fire-affected communities, at Batemans Bay, to re-commit to the cause.

The Government's policy response to the impact on business of COVID-19 and health restrictions reflects ACCI's thought leadership. ACCI argued for wage subsidies for employees and apprentices, cash injections and investment incentives for



Ray Sputore
/// President

businesses, and accelerated personal income tax cuts. All were delivered, as ACCI's persistence paid-off, for example in winning greater investment in vocational education and training.

Our guides to support employers were recognised as best-practice by our international affiliates, and we secured a reboot of the national roadmap to re-open the economy, to give business a fighting chance while controlling the virus.

I'd like to thank my colleagues on our Board and members for their support in my first year as President. While there is still a great deal of work to do, our Board, CEO James Pearson and his team can be proud of what they have achieved for people in business everywhere.

CEO'S MESSAGE



We have helped our members to keep businesses alive and save jobs in the face of drought, bushfires and now pandemic.

ACCI gave practical and speedy advice to employers on how to get support from government and ACCI members and understand major changes in regulations so they can respond, recover and rebuild.

Members have been magnificent in helping us to lobby, by providing evidence for our arguments and joining us in campaigns and negotiations. Together we have persuaded government to make and improve policies to sustain employers and the people who depend on them.

ACCI has influenced, through the relationships we have built over years as well as links forged in the crisis, changes to laws regulating businesses and workplaces. We have had a significant say in the unprecedented investment of public funds to sustain the private sector and government's adoption of more nimble, targeted and proportionate responses to virus risks.

We have led the charge to salvage tourism, hospitality and events, which employ many Australians, and which were hit first and hard by government restrictions on the movement and gathering of people. Our advocacy for a Trans-Tasman airbridge led to the first steps in re-opening international borders in a safe and controlled way.

Our industrial relations advocacy went from a full-frontal social media campaign in support of the government's Ensuring Integrity Bill, to stand up to workplace abuse from militant unions, to negotiating with the ACTU to secure changes in workplace awards and laws that saved businesses and jobs.



James Pearson
/// Chief Executive Officer

We are developing and putting forward policies to manage risk and drive recovery, to make Australia the best place to do business in a COVID-19 Normal world.

This has been a hard year for the ACCI family and the communities we support. We have faced personal and professional challenges together with the support of members and the Board led by President Ray Sputore. We have learned and perfected new skills and adapted quickly to new ways of working.

My team has done everything I've asked of them on behalf of members and more. They deserve great credit for all that we have achieved for people in business this year.

AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP NETWORK

(as at Oct 2020)



The Australian Chamber is Australia's largest and most representative business network.

Our vision is to make Australia the best place in the world to do business – so that Australians have the jobs, living standards and opportunities to which they aspire.

Our purpose is to mobilise the ideas, influence and passion of people in business to achieve policy outcomes in the national interest.

Our membership includes all state and territory chambers of commerce and over 80 industry associations. Together we represent hundreds of thousands of

businesses in every state and territory and across all industries.

Ranging from small and medium enterprises to the largest companies, our network employs millions of people.

We focus on issues that impact on business, including economic reform, industry policy, trade and investment, workplace relations, work health and safety, and employment, migration, education and training.

We give Australian businesses a platform to advocate for free trade and open markets and influence policy decisions affecting business in national and global forums.

CHAMBER MEMBERS



The combined power and influence of the peak business group in every Australian state and territory – the chamber network – gives ACCI unrivalled geographic representation and reach. We aim to complement at the national level the work they do in their own jurisdictions.



Business NSW



Business SA



Canberra Business Chamber



Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia



Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory



Chamber of Commerce Queensland



Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry



Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

(as at Oct 2020)



Industry associations bring sectoral horsepower and expertise at national, state and territory level, through their own networks, to boost our national policy and advocacy. Together with our chamber members, they represent the breadth and depth of the Australian economy and the businesses that drive it.



**accommodation
association**
Accommodation Association
of Australia



accord
hygiene, cosmetic & specialty products industry
ACCORD Australasia
Limited



AMCA
WE SPEAK FOR
AIR CONDITIONING
Air Conditioning and Mechanical
Contractors' Association



**Animal
Medicines
Australia**
Animal Medicines
Australia



**APRA
AMCOS**
APRA AMCOS



afa
Great advice for more Australians
Association of Financial
Advisers



**ais
nsw**
Association of Independent
Schools of NSW



**AUSTRALIA
ARAB CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE
& INDUSTRY**
Aust Arab Chamber of
Commerce & Industry



AuSAE
The Australasian Society
of Association Executives
Australasian Society of
Association Executives



AADA
Australasian Automotive
Dealer Association
Australian Automotive
Dealer Association



**Australian
Beverages**
Australian Beverages
Council Limited



ACFA
AUSTRALIAN
CABINET AND
FURNITURE
ASSOCIATION
Australian Cabinet and
Furniture Association (ACFA)



ACA
AUSTRALIAN
CHIROPRACTORS
ASSOCIATION
Australian Chiropractors
Association



ADA
AUSTRALIAN DENTAL
ASSOCIATION
Australian Dental
Association Inc



ADIA
Australian Dental Industry Association
Australian Dental
Industry Association



AFEI
Australian Federation of
Employers & Industries
Australian Federation of
Employers and Industries



afta
AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION
OF TRAVEL AGENTS
Australian Federation
of Travel Agents



AFIA
Australian Finance
Industry Association
Australian Finance
Industry Association

**AUSTRALIAN
Gift & Homewares
ASSOCIATION**
Australian Gift & Homewares
Association



AIIA
AUSTRALIAN HOTELS
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Australian Hotels
Association



aicm
Australian Institute of
Credit Management
Australian Institute of
Credit Management



AUSTRALIAN MADE
Australian Made
Campaign Ltd



AMMA
AUSTRALIAN
RESOURCES &
ENERGY GROUP
Australian Mines &
Metals Association



AMTA
Australian Mobile
Telecommunications
Association
Australian Mobile
Telecommunications
Association



ARIA
AUSTRALIAN RECORDING
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Australian Recording
Industry Association Ltd

Industry Association Members (Continued)



Australian Restructuring Insolvency & Turnaround Association



Australian Retailers Association



Australian Roofing Tile Association



Australian Steel Institute



Australian Tourism Export Council



Australian Trucking Association



Australian Tyre Industry Council



Boating Industry Association



Bus Industry Confederation



Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals



Caravan Industry Association of Australia



Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia



Chemistry Australia Ltd



Clubs Australia/
ClubsNSW



Concrete Masonry Association of Australia



Consult Australia



Consulting Surveyors National



Consumer Healthcare Products Australia



CPA Australia



Cruise Lines International Association



Customer Owned Banking Association Limited



Direct Selling Association of Australia Inc



Exhibition & Event Association of Australasia



Fitness Australia Ltd



Gaming Technologies Association



Governance Institute of Australia



Housing Industry Association



Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA)



Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia



Institute of Civil Infrastructure

Industry Association Members (Continued)



International Education Association of Australia



International Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association of Australia Limited (IFCBAA)



Large Format Retail Association Ltd



Live Performance Australia



Master Builders Australia Limited



Master Plumbers' and Mechanical Services



Medical Technology Association of Australia



Medicines Australia



National Automotive Leasing & Salary Packaging Association



National Electrical & Communication Association



National Employment Services Association



National Fire Industry Association



National Retail Association Limited



NSW Hire Car Association



NSW Taxi Council



Outdoor Media Association



Pharmacy Guild of Australia



Print and Visual Communications Association of Australia



Recruitment, Consulting and Staffing Association Australia & New Zealand



Restaurant & Catering Australia



Screen Producers Australia



The Australian Veterinary Association Ltd



The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia



The National Roads and Motorists Association



Think Brick Australia



Tourism Accommodation Australia (A Division of AHA)



Tourism Training Australia



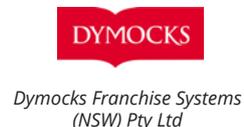
Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce

BUSINESS LEADERS COUNCIL MEMBERS

(as at Oct 2020)



The Australian Chamber Business Leaders Council provides a platform for individual businesses to directly engage with Australian Chamber activities by facilitating access and networking between the corporate sector and federal legislators and policy makers. A busy calendar of events in major cities promotes ACCI's chamber and industry association members, an exchange of ideas among participants and creates invaluable networks among members and political leaders. Membership of the Australian Chamber Business Leaders Council includes:



Business Leaders Council Members (Continued)



Eftpos Australia



Employers Mutual Management Pty Ltd



Energy Industries Superannuation Scheme



Engage Comply Pay



Google Australia and New Zealand Pty Ltd



Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers



HCF



Hearing Australia



Home Consortium Limited



Imperial Tobacco Australia Limited



Insurance Australia Group (IAG)



Intralot Australia Pty Ltd



IQ Group Global



JCDECAUX Australia & New Zealand



JLL



Kingsway Australia Pty Ltd



Laureate International Universities ANZ / Torrens University



Life Without Barriers



Mastercard



National Heart Foundation



NBN Co



Netlinkz Limited



OpenLearning Australia



Ord Minnett



Ozland Security Services



Philip Morris Limited



Pfizer Australia Pty Ltd



Paintback Ltd



PremierNational



Primary Communication Partners Pty Ltd

Business Leaders Council Members (Continued)



NATIONAL SECRETARIAT



The Australian Chamber's national secretariat delivers the Chamber's activities on behalf of Members. Team members are based in Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.

/// CEO Office



James Pearson
Chief Executive Officer



Lee-Anne Dean
Executive Assistant to the CEO and Office Manager



Stephen Schmidt
Company Secretary, Director of Corporate Services



Kathryn Lee
Financial Controller



Kelly Wu
Finance Officer



Michelle Straight
Executive Support Officer

/// Corporate

/// Membership, Marketing and Events



Paul Nicolaou
Director, Business Leaders Council, Membership and Events



Tracy Rieger
Senior Manager, Membership and Marketing



Natalie Chynoweth
Communications and Events Coordinator



Nerida Pearson
Executive Support Officer



Ross Lambie
Chief Economist, Economic & Industry Policy



Peter Grist
Senior Economist, Economic & Industry Policy



Daniel Popovski
Senior Policy Adviser, Economic & Industry Policy

/// Economics and Industry; Sustainability

/// Workplace Relations



Scott Barklamb
Director, Workplace Relations



Tamsin Lawrence
Deputy Director, Workplace Relations



Ingrid Fraser
Senior Adviser, Workplace Relations

/// Employment & Skills; Tourism



Jenny Lambert
Director, Employment & Skills, Director, Tourism



Krithika Gururaj
Senior Policy Adviser, Employment & Skills, and Tourism



Sophie Lebang
Policy Officer, Employment & Skills



Victoria Matterson
Senior Policy Adviser, Employment & Skills, and Tourism

/// Trade and International Affairs



Bryan Clark
Director, Trade and International Affairs



Sara Gillespie
Policy Support Officer, Trade and International Affairs

/// Work Health and Safety



Jennifer Low
Director, Work Health and Safety & Workers' Compensation

/// Media and Campaigns



Marie Hogg
Senior Adviser, Media

BOARD MEMBERS



Ray Sputore
President



Nola Watson
Deputy President; CEO,
Business NSW



Jeremy Johnson AM
Immediate Past President



James Pearson
Chief Executive Officer



Angela Fiumara
Executive Director, Policy and
Public Affairs, Business NSW



Lyall Gorman
President, Business NSW



Nikki Govan
External Business Director



Paul Guerra
CEO, Victorian Chamber of
Commerce and Industry



Nicolle Jenkins
President, Chamber of
Commerce and Industry of
Western Australia



Steve Knott AM
CEO, Australian Mines
and Metals Association



Chris Rodwell
CEO, Chamber of Commerce and
Industry of Western Australia



Karyn Sobels
President, Victorian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry



Tony Schiffmann
President, Chamber of Commerce
and Industry Queensland

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT



| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Revenue & Expenditure | \$'000 | \$'000 |
| Total revenue & other income | 6,682 | 6,958 |
| Total expenditure | 6,505 | 6,805 |
| Operating surplus/(deficit) | 177 | 153 |
| Total comprehensive income | 315 | (86) |
| Assets & Liabilities | | |
| Total assets | 8,037 | 8,477 |
| Total liabilities | 1,478 | 2,005 |
| Net assets | 6,558 | 6,472 |

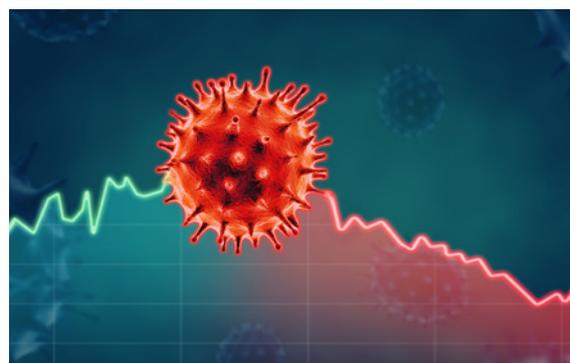


Strategic investment into improved systems and services

In 2019/20 the Australian Chamber continued its investment in websites to improve advocacy and business processes to improve efficiency. We directed resources, to support members in response to bushfires and the pandemic, and improve financial sustainability.

Prudent financial stewardship through the pandemic

The Australian Chamber enjoyed an operational surplus in 2019/20, the impact of the pandemic on investments but was negative, resulting in an unrealised total comprehensive income deficit. The secretariat is managing finances to ensure positive future operational results and an improved total comprehensive income outcome.



Strategic revenue growth

Revenue in 2019/20 grew \$259,000 (2018/19 it grew \$205,000) from increased Industry Association and Business Leaders' Council member recruitment.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023



Our vision

To make Australia the best place in the world to do business—so that Australians have the jobs, living standards and opportunities to which they aspire.

Our purpose

Mobilise the ideas, influence and passion of people in business to achieve policy outcomes in the national interest.

Our values

Unity of purpose, commitment to **excellence, independence** in advocacy, **respect** for our stakeholders and **integrity** in all that we do for our members.

The Company's strategic priorities and initiatives that underpin them:

to be an influential voice of business:

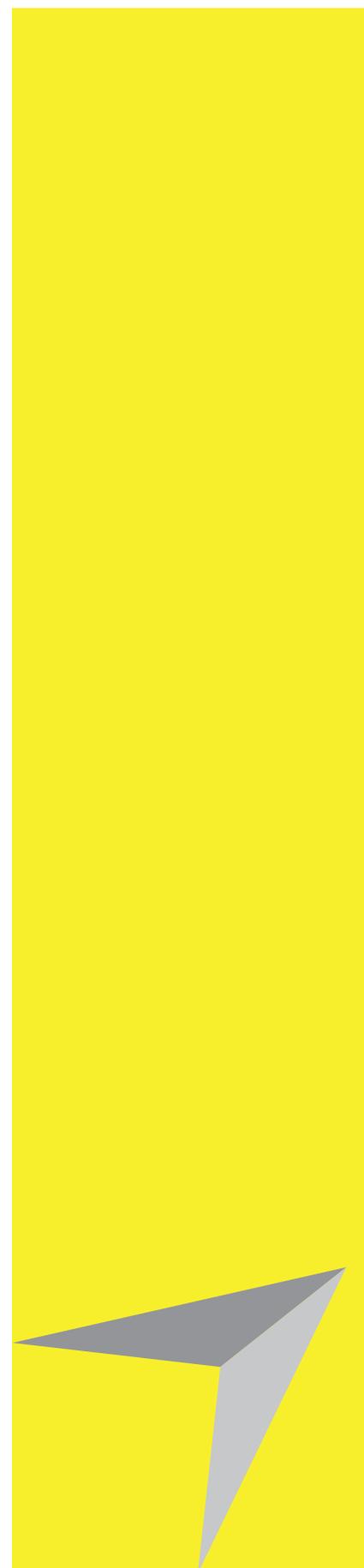
- use our influence to achieve advocacy outcomes;
- leverage the political and news cycles;
- deliver advocacy campaigns and events in support of policy outcomes;

to be a business policy powerhouse:

- provide thought leadership and policy positions in;
 - workplace relations;
 - skills;
 - trade; and
 - economic reform;
- develop policies on the key priorities established by members;
- enhance policy collaboration with members and international network;

to secure long-term financial sustainability:

- ensure membership model delivers compelling value;
- revenue base offers sustainability and funds operations; and
- enhance efficiency and cost effectiveness of our operations.



GOVERNANCE



The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (the Australian Chamber) is a member based, not-for-profit company, which is limited by guarantee with a Board of Directors governed by the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) and Memorandum and Articles of Association. Membership comprises State and Territory Chambers of Commerce and Industry and National and State Industry Associations.

General Council

General Council is a council of members that oversees governance and determines policy on current issues, which provides a mandate for advocacy on matters of importance to the business community. It is advised by the Board, policy committees and working parties that meet between Council meetings. Senior office-bearers, executives from the Australian Chamber's member organisations, Australian Chamber Board members, and senior members of staff attend General Council. General Council usually meets three times each year, in Canberra for one meeting and in other State and Territory jurisdictions on a national rotating basis. During the past year, General Council met in Canberra in November 2019, NSW South Coast in March 2020 and held a video meeting in July 2020. Ray Sputore is Chair of General Council.

Board

The Board of Directors is responsible for Corporate Governance, performance monitoring, and the strategic direction of the company. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate management structures are in place and such structures operate efficiently and transparently. Members at the Annual General Meeting elect Office Bearers and note the Eligible Chamber appointed Board members. At the 2019 Annual General Meeting, Ray Sputore from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia was elected President and Board Chair while Nola Watson, from New South Wales Business Chamber, was elected Deputy President. The Board is supported by a number of Committees including the Board Executive Committee and Governance Review Subcommittee. These Committees operate under Charters or Terms-of-Reference approved by the Board.

Board Executive Committee

The Board Executive Committee has been established to assist the Board in discharging its responsibilities by dealing with matters of importance to the Board, which arise between Board meetings. The Committee also monitors strategic risks, advises the Board on corporate governance, oversees financial and investment activity, and reviews the effectiveness of the external audit and internal controls. Ray Sputore is the Chair.

Executive Management Group

The Executive Management Group (EMG) provided support to the Board in achieving objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. The EMG consisted of the CEOs of State and Territory Chambers of Commerce and Industry. James Pearson was the Chair. The EMG was replaced this year with a monthly meeting of CEOs of State and Territory Chambers of Commerce and Industry to discuss policy and advocacy issues on a national basis.

Governance Review Subcommittee

The Governance Review Subcommittee is a committee of the Board convened and Chaired by the Board Chair. The Committee comprises the Board Executive Committee and another Board member. The role of this Committee is to assist the Board by undertaking a review on the efficiency and performance of governance in the Australian Chamber. A CEO Reference Group comprising CEOs from Eligible Chamber Members also supports this Committee.

Governance Activities

Key governance documents include the Strategic Plan, Risk Management Register, and sound Board agendas and support materials. These documents are used by the Board to oversight administration and financial accountability. Underpinning business systems and processes allow the Board to play an appropriate and central role for ethical and responsible decision-making and building capacity within the Australian Chamber. The Strategic Plan is a rolling three-year plan and was updated in October 2020 to cover the 2020-2023 period. The Risk Management Register is focused on strategic issues, which are reviewed regularly. Board meeting processes are structured to address strategic issues, governance, and performance management.

KPMG provides independent audit services and has verified that the annual financial statements provide a true and fair view of our finances and operations for the last financial year. The external auditor makes an annual declaration of independence. A policy of rotation of audit partners is in place. KPMG attends relevant Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting to address any member questions.



DROUGHTS, FIRES, HAILSTORMS AND A PANDEMIC



The start of 2020 will be remembered for a succession of extreme events in Australia. Drought, severe bushfires, hail storms and the outbreak of a global pandemic dominated the first quarter of this year. Cumulatively, the extraordinary conditions that shaped the start of the year disrupted almost every aspect of Australian society and the economy. ACCI stepped up into a leadership role for the business community and increased our engagement and influence with our Government stakeholders.

Bushfires

By the end of 2019, the Bureau of Meteorology declared 2019 Australia's warmest and driest year on record. By early January 2020, fires were burning across the country and smoke from the bushfires continued to blanket Australia's south-east for many months with substantial adverse environmental, economic and health effects.

ACCI engaged early with industry associations and state and territory chambers to better understand the concerns and challenges faced by small business in fire-affected communities. This has been critical in developing and advocating for our policy ideas in response to the bushfire emergency.

ACCI created an online portal <https://bushfireinfo.business> with member support to provide a central point of information for small businesses affected by the bushfires. The portal was well received by the chamber network and stakeholders more broadly.



In response to the bushfires the Government established the National Bushfire Recovery Agency and announced \$2 billion in funding over 2 years. It also provided a suite of measures to support impacted small businesses. This followed direct lobbying by ACCI and state and local chambers and industry associations, including increased grant funding, concessional loans (a specific ACCI request to the Prime Minister), tax relief, a dedicated and single contact point to help businesses access the support that is available, and financial counselling services that are targeted to help small and family business owners deal with the emotional and financial challenges they face. ACCI is advocating to Government for further, targeted measures based on feedback from our members and affected businesses.

ACCI continues to engage with Government, and the National Bushfire Recovery Agency in particular, to ensure it is aware of the lived experiences and needs of business owners in affected areas in the development of assistance measures.

Key meetings attended include:

- 13 January 2020, Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash to discuss a business support package;
- 14 January 2020, Small Business Roundtable chaired by the Prime Minister; attended by ACCI, several member chambers and industry associations and many local chambers of commerce;
- 17 January 2020, President Ray Sputore and James Pearson attended the Prime Minister's Peak Body Roundtable. ACCI member industry associations Australian Trucking Association (ATA) and Master Builders Australia (MBA) also attended;
- 28 January 2020, initial peak body coordination forum held by the National Bushfire Recovery Agency (NBRA). This forum is being held monthly to understand and identify the needs and resources that are available among the attendees in order to deliver a unified solution to bushfire affected areas. ACCI member industry associations ATA and MBA also attended; and
- 29 January 2020, Sir Peter Cosgrove (BCA Recovery Fund Chair) meeting with chambers and mayors of fire affected areas. Business NSW and Business SA also attended.

In the lead-up to the March General Council, ACCI announced it would move its March and July General Council meetings to bushfire-affected regions.

Bateman's Bay hosted ACCI's Tourism Recovery Summit along with General Council and attendees were taken on a tour of local regional businesses, including the Bawley Vale Estate Winery which was affected by the Currowan bushfire in December.

The Tourism Recovery Summit held on 5 March heard from Tourism Australia, Australian Regional Tourism and Tourism Research Australia on the state of play in the market following the effects of both bushfires and COVID-19 and their response activities to date. Participants discussed the impacts they've experienced, and a clear list of needs was developed for pursue with Tourism Ministers for both bushfire and COVID-19 impacts.



Leigh Sorenson, Tourism Australia speaking at the Tourism Recovery Summit



Stephen Cartwright, Former CEO, BusinessNSW (Facilitator), Caroline Odgers, Regional Manager ACT/South East NSW, GIVIT, Councillor Sharon Tapscott, Deputy Mayor, Bega Valley Shire Council and Natalie Turmine, CEO, Campbell Page



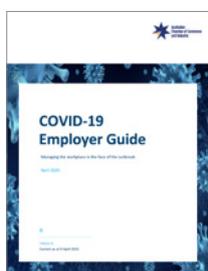
Councillor Liz Innes, Mayor of Eurobodalla Shire Council addressing the General Council Dinner

KEEPING EMPLOYERS INFORMED THROUGHOUT THE CRISIS



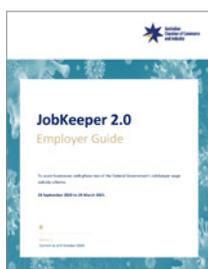
The rapid onset of COVID-19 and unprecedented restrictions on opening and running businesses throughout the country created a desperate demand for information from those running businesses and fielding questions from concerned employees and customers.

Building on our work over the summer in helping businesses respond to fires and other natural disasters, ACCI set up www.australianchambercovid.com and published free of charge a series of business guides to provide the information needed to try to stay in business and retain people in work during COVID-19 and pandemic induced recession.



COVID-19 Employer Guide

This Guide addresses the key work health and safety and employment issues for employers seeking to manage through COVID-19, including updates on changes to awards and employment legislation.



JobKeeper Payment Employer Guide

ACCI prepared guides on both JobKeeper and JobKeeper 2.0 to explain and answer some of the more common questions from employers on the JobKeeper payment scheme. It has been updated throughout 2020 for changes to JobKeeper eligibility, payment rates, and related Fair Work Act flexibilities.



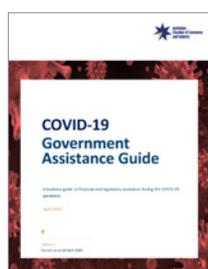
Roadmap Out - Headline Measures Fact Sheet

The Headline Measures Fact Sheet sets out the various National Cabinet and State and Territory specific Directives over the course of the pandemic. This includes information on social distancing measures, mass gatherings, travel restrictions, self-isolation requirements, declared emergency status and school closures.



Fair Work Flexibilities - Legacy Employer Guide

This Guide explains and answers some of the more common questions employers may have around the modified Fair Work Act flexibilities available.



Government Assistance Guide

This Guide identifies and provides a general overview of the financial and regulatory relief governments are providing to businesses affected by COVID-19 and their employees. It helps businesses navigate where to go for help and support.

THE EMERGENCE OF COVID-19 AND THE INITIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE



Originating in China, the outbreak of COVID-19 commenced in December 2019 and continues to expand around the world. The evolving health crisis has resulted in an economic crisis that is unprecedented both in its scale and speed. Australian businesses across all industries and regions have endured sizeable supply side and demand side shocks in response to this extraordinary event. While some businesses have fared well and others are surviving by fundamentally changing the way they operate, there are many that have closed, many that will not last and many which will barely hang on.

February

From the 1st February 2020, the Australian Government reacted with an **initial containment strategy** involving curtailing the movement of people potentially exposed, or at risk of exposure, resulting in significant early impacts on the aviation, tourism and education sectors of our economy, along with airfreight trade impacts.

ACCI engaged early with the Commonwealth on the impact of curtailed international travel, participating in **Austrade Tourism Incident Communications** group and **DFAT meetings**.

March

In March, as the case numbers increased with the return of international travellers, we saw national discussions and preparations increase in anticipation of an outbreak of cases in Australia.



The Commonwealth, recognising the wide-reaching potential implications of the virus and the speed and agility by which peak bodies could provide relevant input into decision making, established a number of consultative mechanisms that ACCI was invited to including the **Attorney-General's Roundtable**, **Industry Minister's Supply Chain Roundtable** and the **Coronavirus Business Liaison Unit (CBLU)**. This was the beginning of an unprecedented level of open engagement between government and industry.

Recognising that Government support measures would be needed to support business activity through the outbreak ACCI's ideas were sought by key Ministerial offices. **ACCI submitted a range of support measure ideas** including to: consider a wage subsidy to impacted employers to keep employees in work, expand the **Instant Asset Write Off**, bring forward personal income tax cuts, once-off increases in transfer payments, accelerate the disbursement of funds already promised for bushfire response and recovery, provide **a trade boost to both exports and imports** by reducing non-tariff barriers and **increase export market development grants and abolish tariffs**.

These ideas along with the proposed **"Jobs@Risk scheme"** (which became **JobKeeper**) were further refined in ongoing correspondence with the PM, Treasurer, the newly established Treasury (CBLU) and five other Ministers in the lead up to the JobKeeper announcement on 31 March and the suite of additional fiscal support measures over the following weeks.

JobKeeper 1.0

After successfully advocating for wage subsidies to support jobs, ACCI played a key role in ensuring the **JobKeeper scheme** could be accessed in practice by struggling employers, both in terms of clarity and flexibility in implementation, and by ensuring the payments were supported by complementary changes to workplace relations rules.

Building on the ideas developed at the award level, ACCI successfully engaged with Government to secure the significant **temporary changes to the Fair Work Act** for employers and employees who have access to the wage subsidy, both in relation to the initial JobKeeper scheme, and to its extension. These workplace relations changes have played a significant role in ensuring the subsidy scheme has operated as intended and supported job retention during recent months.

The concurrent health and jobs crisis saw ACCI members urgently needing information on their employment options, including businesses benefitting from JobKeeper. ACCI produced a series of guides to assist employers, including a **JobKeeper Guide** outlining what employers need to know and how to ensure compliance with the provisions. The Guide also generated questions on the administration of the scheme and assistance, which ACCI has channelled into government, securing both clarification and changes to how the scheme operate.



Photo: ACCI's Deputy Director – Workplace Relations, Tamsin Lawrence appears on The Australian's Remaking Business Series, where Tamsin answered questions about JobKeeper and other assistance available to business.

A snapshot of our performance against our four thought leadership pillars



| Outcome sought by ACCI | Outcome achieved |
|--|---|
| Workplace Relations | |
| JobKeeper - Need for wage subsidy support | 31 March - JobKeeper announced |
| JobKeeper 2.0 Extension - Need for certainty that support would continue to businesses most impacted | July - Extension of JobKeeper beyond Sep to March 2021 achieved. |
| Fair Work Act JobKeeper flexibilities | 3 April – Time-bound changes to FWA announced reflecting concepts developed by ACCI and members through the award system. 1 September – The FWA flexibilities were extended for the life of the extended application of JobKeeper. |
| Extra Resources For Fair Work Ombudsman Advice | FWO Grant \$1.5 million – contract signed in June – delivery through member chambers. |
| Award Flexibility - To enable more efficient trading during pandemic | 30 March onwards - successful changes to several modern awards. |
| Skills | |
| Real increase in VET funding - reflected in national agreement | 5 August – Specific wording included in Heads of Agreement between Governments. |
| 50% Apprenticeship Wage Subsidy - extension beyond September, larger businesses eligible and available for commencements. | 15 July - Extension delivered and expanded to medium sized businesses. 6 Oct – Subsidy extended to commencing apprentices and trainees. |
| Changes to PaTH - to deliver industry models to address youth unemployment | 23 July – Announced. Tender opened to industry bodies including ACCI members and its members. |
| Trade | |
| Export Market Development Grant - increase the cap, more funds available | 1 April - All claims paid in full. |
| Biosecurity Levy - was to apply to container shipments and potentially cruise ships | 20 May - Levy is no longer proceeding. |
| International Air Freight Assistance Mechanism | Expanded by a further \$250 m and extended to year end. |

| Outcome sought by ACCI | Outcome achieved |
|---|--|
| Economic Reform | |
| <p>Instant Asset Write off Accelerated Depreciation Extension and full expensing of business investment support measures</p> | <p>12 March – value of assets increased to \$150,000 for purchases to 30 Jun 20. 50% depreciation deduction for eligible assets purchased up to 30 June 2021. 6 Oct - temporary full expensing of any expensing on eligible depreciable assets and increasing the turnover for eligible businesses to \$5 billion.</p> |
| <p>Concessional Loans to Business – funds needed for cash flow modelled on growth fund</p> | <p>22 March - Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme announced.</p> |
| <p>Commercial rent support</p> | <p>3 April - National Cabinet announced mandatory code of conduct.</p> |
| <p>Business Stimulus and Cash Support</p> | <p>12 March - \$25K for SMEs . 22 March – up to \$100K to SMEs and NFPs with a minimum payment of \$20K.</p> |
| <p>Cyber Security Roadmap</p> | <p>6 Oct - additional \$201.5 million in funding for the Cyber-security strategy, a key component of the Roadmap</p> |

April

When the first wave of COVID-19 hit Australia, increased flexibility was urgently needed in Awards as an immediate term response to the pandemic and trading restrictions if employers were to be able to retain as many Australians as possible in work.

ACCI and members worked with unions to secure the urgent **variation of a number of modern awards** in the Fair Work Commission, to allow employer and employees to vary hours, duties, location of work etc to equip employers and employees with options to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on doing businesses and retaining jobs. These measures were subsequently taken up, and extended more widely, both in legislation to support the JobKeeper package, and as the basis for ongoing discussions on award reform more generally.



Also, in the Fair Work Commission, ACCI represented member interests on claims relating to **unpaid pandemic leave** and scope to take double annual leave at half pay. ACCI successfully defended union claims for employer funded paid pandemic leave and instead engaged with Government to secure government-funded pandemic leave disaster payments.

In April, ACCI **surveyed** a broad cross section of our membership to assess the impact of COVID-19 on business and to gauge the effectiveness of the Government's support and stimulus measures in helping businesses through the crisis. The survey was undertaken between 30 March and 17 April and involved 1,497 businesses across all states and territories. The survey found the necessary social distancing measures that were enacted by Governments to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 have severely impacted the revenue of many businesses. Over one third of businesses surveyed have experienced an 80% reduction in revenue relative to what they would normally expect this time of the year and half have experienced over a 50% reduction. The **Business Conditions Survey** was repeated three times and was welcomed by the various government agencies we worked with as an important source of data to inform policy decisions.

The **Safe Work Australia** website was updated becoming a central hub of work health and safety (WHS) guidance and tools to help Australian workplaces manage the health and safety risks posed by COVID-19. ACCI as a member of Safe Work Australia contributed to the **review and development of COVID19 specific guidance** on a range of hazards and sectors. ACCI's WHS&WC Committee actively reviewed and provided feedback on this industry and hazard specific COVID19 Guidance and assisted in raising and troubleshooting practical issues employers in our member network faced.

ACCI was an active member in the Government's **Health Industry Coordination Group** that was wound down at the end of May. The small government-industry group coordinated on critical medical and health supplies to deal with the pandemic (including ventilators, ICU equipment, COVID-19 test kits and PPE) and particularly PPE to enable businesses to re-open and/or re-grow their operations. In this and other forums, we continuously flagged the relevance of the knowledge and experience held by Chambers and Industry Associations to contribute to the task of planning and implementing re-start and recovery.

COVID RESTART ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITIES



ACCI continued to pursue our members' concerns through regular meetings with key players in the federal government, across a range of agencies and ministerial offices with an interest in the issue. This included: the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission (NCCC), Safe Work Australia, the Attorney-General's Office and Department, Treasury, the Coronavirus Business Liaison Unit (CBLU), Department of Health, Department of Industry (DISER) and other relevant ministerial offices. The real-time member feedback and data the ACCI network was able to provide was used to inform National Cabinet considerations and was heavily relied upon by agencies in critical decision making.

May

In May the focus of Government and industry began to shift to active restart and planning for recovery along with ongoing COVIDSafe activities. Governments began focusing and urging Industry to develop Industry specific solutions and present plans for a safe way out.

Our Industry Association and Chamber of Commerce members did just this and we provided various Federal Ministerial offices and Government Departments with numerous examples of industry protocols, training, guidelines and more, all developed to ensure workers, customers, communities and governments could be confident that businesses were prepared and willing to meet the necessary health requirements to successfully manage the threat of COVID in our workplaces when they reopened or increased in operations.

Unprecedented engagement with Government decision makers

With the challenges that 2020 brought, not least the restriction on movement and gatherings, ACCI quickly revised and adopted to new technologies to ensure ongoing engagement with members and government stakeholders.

ACCI Members have been engaged on restart and recovery discussions through:

- Industry Roundtables facilitated by ACCI with Commonwealth Departments;
- More frequent ACCI policy committee meetings, and Chief Economists' group meetings;
- Zoom Videoconferences with Government decision makers and advisers e.g. Nev Power, NCCC and Charlotte Tressler, CBLU; and
- Regular and targeted emails requesting feedback or input from members to feed back to Departments for Ministerial briefs.

TOURISM RESTART TASKFORCE MEMBERS



In 2019 the travel, tourism and hospitality industry generated employment for over one million Australians, with international tourism earnings \$45.4 Billion and domestic tourism \$80.7 Billion.

By the end of 2019, however, tourism began to feel the negative impacts of a disastrous and tragic bushfire season with communities devastated. On the back of these challenging times, tourism was the first to feel the impacts of COVID-19 with a Chinese tourism travel ban in February followed closely by a more complete tourism shut down by border closures, business closures and all meetings and events cancelled by the COVID-19 response.

By April 2020, travel, tourism and hospitality in Australia was shut down and the impact of the crisis was fully felt by all tourism business owners and workers.

Government measures, such as cash flow support and Jobkeeper have allowed most businesses to survive through this period. During the shutdown phase it became clear that **the restart of the entire industry would require significant planning**. The lead time for bookings and ongoing cancellations, flight route planning, staffing upskilling and re-engagement as well as COVID safety measures would all need to be scheduled to ensure effective recovery. **A Tourism Restart Taskforce**, headed up by immediate past ACCI President, Dr Jeremy Johnson AM, **was established by ACCI through its Australian Chamber Tourism committee** to help facilitate this planning and to provide the advocacy for the steps to be taken to get travel, tourism and hospitality back in business up.

Dr Jeremy Johnson AM (Chair) (ACCI Board member, former CEO Sovereign Hill)

The Hon Bruce Baird AM (Business Events Sydney, TTF)

Sarina Bratton AM (Ponant)

Geoff Donaghy (BECA, ASM Global, ICC Sydney)

Bob East (Tourism Australia)

The Hon Martin Ferguson AM (Tourist Accommodation Australia)

Nikki Govan (Star of Greece)

Denis Pierce (Australian Tourism Export Council)

Graham (Skroo) Turner (Flight Centre)

Jacqui Walshe (The Walshe Group)

John Hart (Australian Chamber – Tourism)

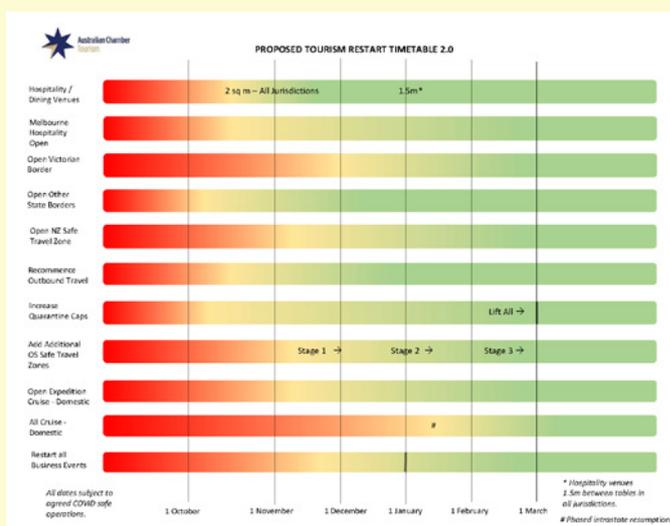
Secretariat Head: Jenny Lambert, Director – Tourism at ACCI

Dr Jeremy Johnson AM

/// Immediate Past President



In May 2020, the Taskforce released a proposed timetable for the restart of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry, identifying 10 categories in need of more certainty. Since then it has released updates to this timetable to reflect the changing circumstances, including the devastating second wave in Victoria.



The timetable received extensive media and public attention both when it was initially released, and in the reissuing of Timetable 2.0.

In early July 2020, the Taskforce released a Tourism Restart Plan that draw out the key elements of industry's proposed timetable and highlighting the need for JobKeeper to be extended for tourism businesses. This plan also incorporated the proposal for a NZ/ACT travel bubble which had been worked on jointly with two New Zealand Chambers of Commerce, the ACT Government and the Canberra Business Chamber.

Since July, the focus of the Tourism Restart Taskforce has been on State Border restrictions, proposals for restart of sectors such as dining, business events, bus & coach and cruise and international Travel Restart.

On 2nd October hard yards by the Taskforce and persistent pressure in the media, to ease state and territory border restrictions and get international travel restarted, was answered with the decision to allow quarantine free travel from New Zealand to Australia, starting with arrivals into NSW, NT and the ACT.

Over the course of the fourteen meetings held to date, the Taskforce met (virtually):

- twice with the Minister for Trade, Tourism & Investment;
- twice with the Chair of the National COVID Coordination Commission;
- Treasury's COVID Business Liaison Unit;
- head of Treasury's JobKeeper review;
- Senators from the Australian Parliament with an interest in tourism restart;
- Tourism Research Australia;
- Tourism Australia; and
- NBN Co.



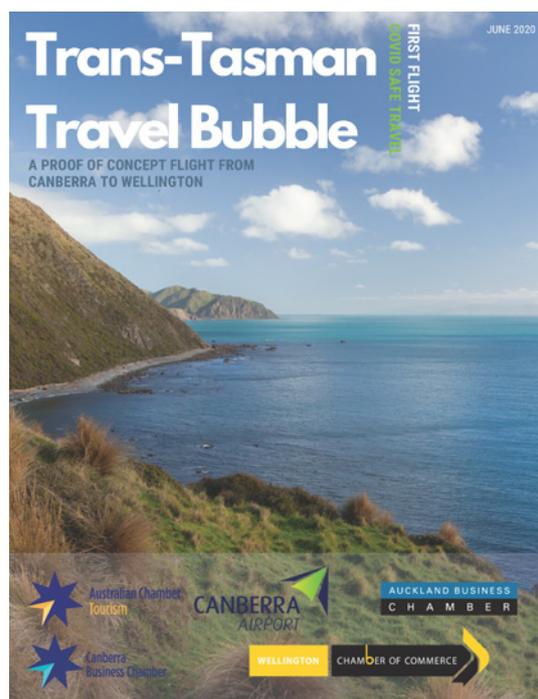
COVID RESTART ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITIES



June

In June we scored a win after weeks of lobbying the National Cabinet, both behind the scenes and in the media, for the removal of the “**one person per 4 square metres**” restriction rule which was having a disproportionate impact on small businesses, particularly those in the hospitality and tourism sectors. National Cabinet agreed a “one person per 2 square metres” rule for smaller premises.

On the international front, we caught the public’s imagination with our proposal for a **Trans-Tasman travel bubble**, to launch the re-opening of Australia’s international linkages with an inaugural flight between New Zealand’s and Australia’s capitals, Wellington and Canberra. Chambers of commerce in New Zealand and Canberra have joined us to promote the initiative, which we see as the first step in establishing air bridges with countries which, like Australia, have brought virus transmission under control.



Throughout the pandemic we have not lost sight of our **four policy pillars**. We have continued to stress the need to save jobs and bring people back to work with sensible policies to re-start businesses; and the importance of longer-term tax reform, industrial relations reform, deregulation and investment in skills and training.

We worked closely with Austrade and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to **boost Australia’s export** efforts. This included successful lobbying for more air cargo support and celebrating the coming into force of the Indonesia-Australia Closer Economic Partnership in which ACCI led Australian business negotiations.

ACCI CEO James Pearson addressed the **Senate Hearing into the Federal Government’s COVID-19 response**. Our call for JobKeeper to be extended, with targeted support for businesses in the hardest hit industries and those likely to still be in dire straits come September, was reported in the national media.

Although our borders are closed, we did not lose sight of our international relations meeting with our US counterparts to plan **joint initiatives internationally** to promote trade and jobs; support meaningful reform of the World Trade Organisation; and build global acceptance in anticipation of a vaccine against the virus. Our Deputy President and Chair of International Chamber of Commerce Australia, Nola Watson, joined ACCI at the **annual World Council meeting of the ICC** where managing COVID and economic recovery were central to discussions.

Industrial Relations Reform Working Groups

A key focus of ACCI during 2020 has been on longer term repair to Australia's workplace relations system and support for restart and recovery through five industrial relations reform working groups chaired by the Attorney-General, covering: enterprise agreement making; modern awards; casual & fixed term employment; compliance and enforcement; and greenfields agreements for new major construction projects.

The groups were tasked with identifying pathways to long-lasting workplace relations reform to support jobs and to helping secure the productivity and efficiency necessary to ensure Australian enterprises can be competitive and to bring investment and global trade back to this country.

As Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, ACCI played a leading role on all five working groups.

ACCI's Workplace Policy Committee met regularly throughout this process and along with ACCI's established workplace relations policies and priorities, enabled ACCI to inject valuable ideas and experiences into the Government's considerations, and to take a leading role in various of the working groups.

Leading into the final sittings of the 2020 Parliamentary year, ACCI anticipates an omnibus bill that addresses each of the five working group areas, and to being centrally involved in the Senate's consideration of reform proposals. The final shape of the legislation and experience during coming months will also shape ACCI's approach to advocacy for more fundamental changes to how we regulate work in Australia which stacks up increasingly poorly compared to our fellow OECD economies, and risks positioning Australia poorly for longer term recovery and prosperity.



July

We made a submission to the **October Federal Budget** and lobbied Canberra for targeted extensions to **JobKeeper (2.0)** and support for people in business who are doing it tough, ahead of the Treasurer's update and JobKeeper announcements 23 July and appeared before the **Senate Inquiry into payment times** for small businesses.

ACCI's Budget submission made the front page of The Australian, highlighting our calls for legislated personal tax cuts to be brought forward to boost incomes and spending.

With great support from members, we lobbied for an extension of the **wage subsidies for apprentices** and for greater investment in VET which was delivered by the Prime Minister's decision to **extend wage subsidies** into next year and expand the number of businesses eligible.

On the back of the announced extension of the apprenticeship wage subsidies we secured another win with an announcement of a \$20 million program to implement new approaches to the **Youth Jobs PaTH program**. This was in direct response to our calls for change over the past year. We met with Ministerial advisers on the need to deliver additional apprenticeship commencement incentives by the time of the Budget in October.

Our lobbying for businesses hard hit by eligibility changes to **JobKeeper** bore fruit. The Treasurer confirmed that Cabinet had addressed the two issues we had been raising with **JobKeeper 2.0**. Firstly, the problems with businesses having to meet the threshold requirements in each of the quarters; and, that the employee eligibility dated back to March instead of picking up new employees since then and July announcement.

Following this announcement, we worked to ensure all employers eligible for **JobKeeper** retained access to the supporting **industrial relations flexibilities** we successfully lobbied for in April.

August

Following the second wave in Victoria we worked closely with our Victorian and national industry association members to mitigate the damage to businesses from the **Victorian lockdown**. We sought to block a new **national COVID Code of Practice** that would create undue pressure on businesses at a time when they are focused on survival.

With the **looming issue of business insolvencies**, we met our members to better understand the extent of the problem, the policy options available, and how ACCI should proceed in its advocacy.

On 22nd October we had a significant win, with National Cabinet agreeing to a **Framework for National Re-opening** based heavily on proposals by ACCI and our members. The Framework should increase certainty, consistency and predictability for business as governments set a course for COVID Normal by Christmas and Victoria begins to re-open. It uses ACCI's certainty principles and includes our ideas for health metrics, additional information on work and travel, a removal of domestic border restrictions, consideration of international travel and removal of the two or four square metre rule.



Certainty Principles and Framework



On 22nd October National Cabinet agreed to a **Framework for National Re-opening** based heavily on proposals by ACCI and our members. The Framework should increase certainty, consistency and predictability for business as

governments set a course for COVID Normal by Christmas and Victoria begins to re-open. It uses ACCI's certainty principles and includes our ideas for health metrics, additional information on work and travel, a removal of domestic border restrictions, consideration of international travel and removal of the 2 or 4 square metre rule.

respond to future outbreaks. ACCI **developed a set of certainty principles and framework for responding** which we refined with members and worked behind the scenes with key contacts in the Commonwealth Government to encourage the National Cabinet and, through it, the States and Territories, to take up our ideas. A refined summary document clearly stating outcomes we were seeking (a framework for decisions, common definitions, and an updated 3-step plan) and a way forward was taken up by Government and saw, in **August, National Cabinet agree to define hotspots and revise the national 3-step plan.**

Our **member chambers wrote to Premiers and Chief Ministers** and **we wrote to the Prime Minister** and **generated media coverage** to support our private lobbying. We brought AiG, BCA and COSBOA on board to broaden visible stakeholder support. Our document replaced the draft prepared by the Commonwealth's own agencies; and ACCI's principles were agreed and concepts adopted in the revised framework announced by National Cabinet on Friday.



ACCI launched our lobbying in June following the start of the second wave in Victoria and the need for greater certainty on how governments would

October

ACCI encouraged State and Territory governments to accelerate the **removal of domestic border restrictions**; and lead the efforts to **reopen the travel pathways** between Australia and New Zealand, and other nations, soon after the pandemic hit. Our premise was that origin / destination pairs where there were low, or no cases should be open to travel provided appropriate safety provisions where adhered to. The blanket closure of international borders damages our economy immensely as we are heavily reliant on students, tourists, employees, migration and business-related travel. We called repeatedly on the Government to inform industry of the requirements for "safe" travel so that the industry could respond commercially. This has been rewarded with the **reopening of travel inbound from NZ** and we hope will soon recommence outbound as well. We have now turned our focus to opening with other markets and the removal of the need for approval to depart from Australia.

The Commonwealth Treasurer, introduced by ACCI Chief Economist Ross Lambie, announced **reforms to Australia's insolvency regime** consistent with changes ACCI has been advocating with the support of members. Images of Josh Frydenberg speaking with ACCI's federation stars in the background appeared widely in broadcast, digital and print media stories on the changes to insolvency laws, responsible lending rules and Budget previews.

A **50% wage subsidy was announced** for new apprentices and trainees. It will help to turn around the long-term decline in apprenticeship numbers and delivers on a key ACCI ask, to make the subsidy available to businesses of all sizes, and it comes on the heels of the government committing to another ACCI priority, to deliver real growth in the overall investment in vocational education and training.

COVID-19 BUDGET AND RECOVERY



In the lead up to this year's Federal Budget, ACCI's assessment of the economy was that the weak domestic economic conditions prior to COVID-19 were still with us – weak consumption, weak wages growth and weak investment. These drivers of economic growth were expected to weaken further as the impact and legacy effects of the health response to COVID-19 and the recession took hold.

The Budget highlighted that significant challenges for the Australian economy remain until a vaccine is developed and made widely available, which results in substantial uncertainty surrounding the global and domestic outlook. The economic recovery rests largely on there being no substantial outbreaks of COVID that undermine the confidence of households to spend and businesses to invest and employ people.

The Budget needs to be viewed in its entirety as a set of interrelated measures aimed at lifting demand and taking the pressure off household and business balance sheets. Tax cuts, investment incentives and wage subsidies are the fiscal measures to drive private sector demand (household consumption and business investment) and job creation. The measures are strongly focused on stimulating the supply-side of the economy in the hope of a business led recovery that will create jobs, which along with tax cuts on top of COVID support, will lift private sector demand and deliver a more dynamic economy longer term.

These measures are supported by an increase in public final demand, which will play a large role in supporting aggregate demand over the next two financial years. The increase in government spending consists mainly of spending on healthcare and other essential services to assist with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and increased expenditure on the National Disability Insurance Scheme along with additional investments in infrastructure and the National Broadband Network.



The strength of the economic recovery from COVID-19 will depend on when and the extent to which both household and business confidence improve, and these in-turn depend on how successful we are at minimising the impact of the virus on the economy. Lifting confidence in the economy is, in ACCI's view, both the most important factor in supporting a recovery and biggest challenge we face after the health crisis. The shape of the recovery will ultimately depend on the ability and willingness of households and businesses to spend.

To support the recovery, Government has a clear role in lifting demand in the economy through spending to reduce unemployment and in undertaking the structural reform that will help improve the economy's performance over the longer term.

The Budget along with the very accommodative monetary policy being adopted by the Reserve Bank will provide significant support to the economy this financial year and next. We should expect both the Federal Government and the RBA to be extremely responsive to either further disruptions caused by COVID or an absence of jobs growth as we recover.

LONGER-TERM VISION



At July's General Council it was agreed that ACCI prepare a long-term strategy for policy reform designed for public distribution once finalised.

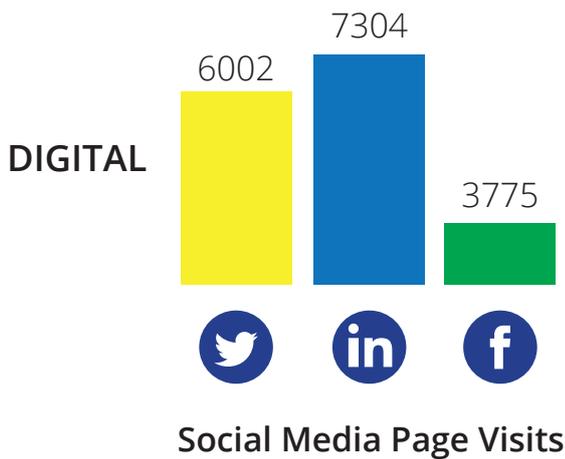
The strategy will be a concise document spelling out ACCI's "big picture" of desired reforms over the next two to three decades. While ACCI's other key public policy work (such as annual budget submissions) deal with specific, here-and-now matters, this document provides the broader context. It will cover a limited number of key policy areas and provide a compelling policy narrative on how Australia can rekindle economic growth and build a future that will continue to deliver high living standards.

A steering committee consisting of ACCI's policy committee chairs has been established to oversee the project. We have held three workshops involving committee chairs, member chamber policy leads and ACCI policy staff seeking views on long-term policy goals.

Progress is going well on synthesising information and distilling the key policy areas, with discussion at General Council in December. The strategy will be finalised ahead of the next Federal Budget in May 2021 and with an eye to the next Federal Election due between August 2021 and May 2022.



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



Tweets: **224**
Twitter Impressions: **352 000**
Twitter Mentions: **1469**
New Followers: **773**

Facebook Posts: **200**
Facebook Reach: **238 421**

LinkedIn Posts: **210**
LinkedIn Impressions: **180 847**

8765
LinkedIn Clicks

77
TOTAL EVENTS

Video Conferences: 54
Live Networking Events: 23

6861 TOTAL EVENT ATTENDEES

133 MEMBER NEWSLETTERS SENT

MEDIA & SUBMISSIONS

92 Media Releases

4530 Print and Online Articles

1484 Radio and Television Appearances

18 Policy Submission

MEMBER NETWORK

8 Chambers

84 Industry Associations

79 Business Leaders Council

66 ICC Australia

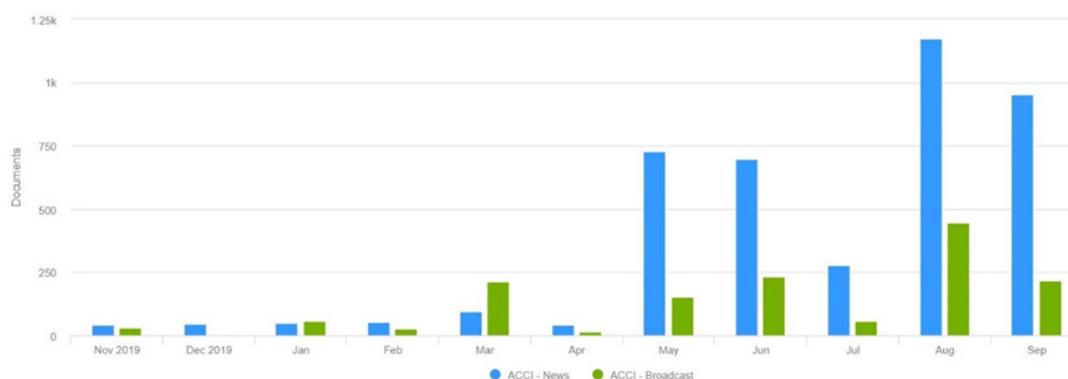
MEDIA



Senior Adviser: Marie Hogg

We thought it historic when the RBA slashed interest rates to 0.75% in October 2019. It was a sluggish time for the economy, with ACCI repeatedly urging banks to pass on the full rate cut. “With slowing economic growth and lower consumer confidence, small businesses have been doing it tough over the past year. This has particularly affected discretionary spending in small retail businesses, including cafes and restaurants,” CEO James Pearson said at the time.

What a difference a year makes.



We find this last year, marred by a global pandemic, natural disasters, economic uncertainty, geopolitical upheaval and trade tensions, bookended by another historic interest rate cut to 0.1%. In that time our team’s publicly advocacy on behalf of Australian enterprise has grown exponentially, whether at Parliament House or on Breakfast TV, on social media or over public webinars.

Our reach across news print, online and broadcast remained steady throughout late year achievements and the 2019-2020 bushfires, with a dramatic uptick as COVID-19 took hold and the necessity for business advocacy heightened.

Media Exposure

| Date | ACCI - News | ACCI - Broadcast |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Sep 2019 | 4 | 0 |
| Oct 2019 | 43 | 31 |
| Nov 2019 | 46 | 2 |
| Dec 2019 | 48 | 58 |
| Jan | 55 | 25 |
| Feb | 96 | 212 |
| Mar | 41 | 15 |
| Apr | 727 | 152 |
| May | 699 | 234 |
| Jun | 280 | 59 |
| Jul | 1,175 | 447 |
| Aug | 952 | 217 |
| Sep | 369 | 32 |
| Total | 4,535 | 1,484 |

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS

VET Funding was a key focus in 2020



Director: Jenny Lambert

Funding for vocational education and training remains a top priority for ACCI members, and we advocated strongly throughout 2019/20 for all Australian governments to recognise the need for them to commit to long term real growth in VET funding. This would assist in addressing one of the main weaknesses of the VET system which is the funding fluctuations and cost shifting between jurisdictions. Although COVID has finally led to a substantial increase in Federal investment in VET, it is important that once the crisis is over, the system does not revert to the old approach.

In response to this continued lobbying, the National Cabinet approved a Heads of Agreement that included the commitment to real funding increases for the first time, and over 2021 as the governments head towards a new National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development, that this commitment remains rock solid.

WORKPLACE RELATIONS



Director: Scott Barklamb

ACCI's workplace relations team has been squarely focussed on supporting employers confronting opening restrictions, recession and uncertainty. In addition, largely prior to COVID-19, ACCI represented employers in other key areas.

Between February and June, ACCI represented members' interests in the 2020 Annual Wage Review, strongly advocating that minimum wages should be maintained at current levels through to mid-2021, and highlighting that during COVID-19 Australia simply could not afford to increase the costs of retaining or regaining jobs, or keeping small businesses in business in the face of massive recession and uncertainty.

While the Fair Work Commission majority very disappointingly awarded an increase of 1.75%, this was delayed for a number of industries most in distress and represents a significantly lower outcome than has been delivered in recent years, reflecting key arguments advanced by ACCI.

ACCI also provided extensive support for the passage of two key industrial relations bills, the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Ensuring Integrity) Bill 2019 and the Fair Work Laws Amendment (Proper Use of Worker Benefits) Bill 2019. Whilst paused due to COVID-19 and discussions on wider workplace reform options, these remain important measures.

ACCI continued to engage with the implications of the future of work for Australian employers, and for our country's idiosyncratic approach to regulating work; which rapidly translated into live challenges as COVID-19 hit. This included engagement with ACCI's peer organisations throughout Asia in February.

Policy engagement with Government was well advanced prior to COVID-19 on areas subsequently addressed in the Attorney General's industrial relations reform working group, including reforming enterprise agreement making, and compliance and enforcement.



ACCI's Director – Workplace Relations, Scott Barklamb and Senior Advisor – Workplace Relations Ingrid Fraser join representatives of the International Organisation of Employers at the Global Summit on the Future of Work in Kuala Lumpur

ACCI also participated in discussions towards the implementation of the Australian Government's commitment to introduce some form of registration of labour hire providers; a process which was disrupted by COVID-19.

ACCI also continued our engagement on the Modern Slavery Expert Advisory Group which had its inaugural meeting this year, on the Australian Government's Committees on Industrial Legislation and International Labour Affairs.

Whilst the International Labour Organisation (ILO) International Labour Conference did not meet in 2020, ACCI continued to engage with proposals for Australia to ratify international labour treaties, and as the representative of Australian employers on the Governing Body of the ILO.

ACCI also engaged with pending legislation on religious discrimination and sexual harassment, following major inquiries during 2019.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION



Director: Jennifer Low

The start of 2020 saw several submissions made including a response to the draft edition 7.7 of the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road & Rail, an ACCC submission on Silica, a response to the NSW WHS Amendment (Review) Bill and our response to the Productivity Commission draft report into mental health.

The WHS&WC Committee met on February 12th to discuss the WHS Model Laws Decision Regulatory Impact Statement and to plan the next steps in our WHS Minister political strategy noting the upcoming meeting of WHS Ministers in April to vote on recommendations.

Following the spread of COVID-19 in Australia and declaration of a pandemic, ACCI won Safe Work Australia (SWA) members agreement to pause non-COVID related work plans in order to move into crisis response mode, and the Attorney-General's Department agreed to postpone the meeting of WHS Ministers.

Over the year we worked with SWA to achieve a number of outcomes starting with WHS compliance and enforcement flexibility when WHS Regulators issued a statement of regulatory intent that they will "apply a common sense and practical approach to interactions with workplaces" on March 31st. The WHS&WC Committee reviewed and commented on over 28 industry specific and 25 topic specific guidance documents produced by SWA in response to the new hazards COVID-19 brought as at July 2020. Along with new guidance on sexual harassment, work-related violence and a proposed psychosocial hazards Code of Practice.



INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AUSTRALIA



Director: Bryan Clark

In the days BC (Before COVID) we had established ACCI as the leading organisation related to Trade Modernisation – building on our work on the Trade Community System, we held a key workshop in Melbourne with many Government agencies as the audience to a selected high skilled set of panellists speaking on what the private sector was already doing and looking to advance in the near term related to trade modernisation and compliance efficiency.

Divisional Director, Bryan Clark was also identified as a key expert in trade modernisation and acknowledged by being invited to a secondment with the Governments Deregulation Taskforce under Assistant Minister to the PM, Ben Morton in August 2019. The secondment was then extended into November 2019 in acknowledgement of the contribution Bryan was making to the Government's efforts to reduce red tape and the regulatory compliance burden for business.

Andrew Willcocks left our team in March 2020 and we were fortunate to welcome back Sara Gillespie to ACCI to support Bryan and our engagement with our international affiliations and looking to add greater value to our members. Sara is also doing a sterling job in supporting the issuance of Certificates of Origin across our network of issuing Chambers around Australia.

Throughout the year we continued to respond to Government inquires and made a number of submissions including on the Export Market Development Grants, the Review of Australia's Bilateral Investment Treaties, the Inquiry into Diversifying Australia's Trade and Investment Profile, and the Inquiry into Supporting Australia's Exports and Attracting Investment.

POLICY SUBMISSIONS



1. Religious Freedoms Reforms Submission to the Attorney General Departments (October 2019)
2. Improving Protections of Employees' Wages and Entitlements: Discussion Paper Response (October 2019)
3. Submission on Input into the Co-Design of the National Skills Commission and Skills Organisations (November 2019)
4. Submission on Input into the Co-design of the National Careers Institute (November 2019)
5. ACCI Submission to the Department of Health Dust Disease Taskforce Consultation Paper (November 2019)
6. Priorities for federal discrimination law reform submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission (November 2019)
7. Submission of the Education Council Review into Senior Secondary Pathways (December 2019)
8. Tourism Pre-Budget Submission (December 2019)
9. Productivity Commission Review of the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (December 2019)
10. 2020-21 Pre-Budget Submission (December 2019)
11. Planning Australia's 2020/21 Migration Program (January 2020)
12. ACCI Submission in response to the draft edition 7.7 of the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road & Rail (January 2020)
13. Submission to the ACCC on the authorisation application from the Australian Engineered Stone Advisory
14. Group (AESAG) (January 2020)
15. Religious Freedoms Bills – Second Exposure Drafts (February 2020)
16. Submission to Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance on the inquiry into the provisions of the WHS Amendment (Review) Bill 2019 (the Bill) (February 2020)
17. WHS Amendment (Review) Bill 2019 (the Bill) (February 2020)
18. Review of Australian Apprenticeships National Skills Needs List Methodology Discussion Paper (February 2020)
19. Response to the Productivity Commission draft report into mental health (February 2020)
20. Inquiry into unlawful underpayments of employees' remuneration submission to the Senate Committee on Economics (March 2020)
21. Submission to the Select Committee on Temporary Migration (March 2020)
22. Submission to the COVID-19 Business Liaison Unit (CBLU), at Treasury (June 2020)
23. 2020-21 Pre-Budget Submission (July 2020)
24. Response to the Productivity Commission Interim Report on the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (July 2020)
25. Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration's Inquiry into the Working Holiday Maker Program (August 2020)
26. Submission on the Higher Education Job Ready Graduates Bill (September 2020)
27. National Freight Data Hub Options Discussion Paper Response Submission (September 2020)
28. Submission to SafeWork NSW on the Draft CoP for Managing Psychological Health (October 2020)

ACCI MEMBER EVENTS

2019 Business Leaders Annual Dinner & Cocktail Reception



Treasurer, the Hon. Josh Frydenberg joined 350 guests at the Australian Chamber Business Leaders Annual Dinner at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra in November.



BUSINESS LEADERS COUNCIL EVENTS



OCTOBER 2019



Catherine Mooney, Head of Stakeholder Relations at AGL, John Pierce AO, Martin Haese, CEO Business SA & Clay Wohling, Partner, MinterEllison. 2nd October, Business SA and Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Energy Forum at MinterEllison in Adelaide.



Megan Motto, CEO, Governance Institute of Australia, Ross McInnes, Partner, Clayton Utz, Dr John A. Rees, Acting Director, Institute for Ethics & Society, & The Hon Anna Bligh AC, CEO, Australian Banking Association. 15th October, Restoring Faith in Corporate Ethics Breakfast and panel discussion at Clayton Utz Offices, Sydney.



Ben Lazzaro, CEO, Australian Made Campaign, Hon Michael McCormack MP, Allyn Beard, Deputy Chairman, Australian Made Campaign & Ross Greenwood. 29th October, 'Australian Makers' Series Launch and Morning Tea at KPMG Offices, Sydney.

NOVEMBER 2019



Megan Motto, CEO Governance Institute of Australia, The Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Tess Phillips, Director of Government & Public Relations Australia New Zealand at JCDecaux. 1st November, Australian Chamber breakfast at Doltone House, Sydney.



The Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO, The Hon John Howard OM AC SSI, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, the Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia, The Hon Gladys Berejiklian, Premier of NSW. 14th November, Major Dinner to Celebrate the Appointment of Australia's Next Ambassador to the United States of America at The Fullerton Hotel, Sydney.



Professor The Hon Gareth Evans AC QC, Samatha Power, Neil Napper, Partner, Lander & Rogers. 25th November, Luncheon at Lander & Rogers Offices, Sydney.

DECEMBER 2019



Senator Andrew Bragg with Melina Morrison, CEO of Business Council of Cooperatives and Mutuals. 19th December, FinTech Lunch at Ernst & Young, Sydney.



The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Senator Hollie Hughes, Senator for NSW, Suresh Manickam, CEO, NECA. 20th December, ACCI's Christmas Lunch at City Tattersalls Club, Sydney.

FEBRUARY 2020



Bronwyn Capanna, Executive Director, ACCORD and Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary for Health Products Regulation, Department of Health. 14th February, Health Forum and Morning Tea with Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, PwC, Sydney.



Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary for Health Products Regulation, Department of Health and Dr Deon Schoombie, CEO, CHP Australia. 14th February, Health Forum and Morning Tea at PwC, Sydney.



Damian Mitsch, CEO, Australian Dental Association and Adjunct Professor John Skerritt, Deputy Secretary for Health Products Regulation, Department of Health. 14th February, Health Forum and Morning Tea at PwC, Sydney.



The Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction and Paul Guerra, CEO, Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Tuesday 18th February, Reception at Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Melbourne.



Geoff Gwilym, Executive Director, Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce and the Hon Angus Taylor MP, Minister for Energy and Emissions. Tuesday 18th February, Reception at Corrs Chambers Westgarth, Melbourne.



Karen Gomez, CEO, Paintback and The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment. 19th February, Networking Breakfast at Allens, Sydney.



Dr Julia Crawford, President, Australian Veterinary Association and The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Minister for the Environment. 19th February, Networking Breakfast at Allens, Sydney.



Michael Pratt AM, Secretary, NSW Treasury and NSW Industrial Relations and Melina Morrison, CEO, BCCM. 25th February, Boardroom Breakfast at EY, Sydney.

MARCH 2020



James Pearson, CEO, ACCI, Nola Watson, Deputy President, ACCI, Councillor Liz Innes, Mayor, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM, the then New South Wales Rural Fire Service commissioner, Fiona Phillips MP, Member for Gilmore, New South Wales, Ray Sputore, President, ACCI, Dr Jeremy Johnson AM, Immediate Past President, ACCI and Lyall Gorman, President, Business NSW and Board Member, ACCI. 3rd March, General Council Dinner, Batemans Bay.



#BackingtheBush Events visiting Bawley Vale Estate. 4th March, Batemans Bay.



Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM, the former NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner and Philippa Kelly, CEO, Large Format Retail Association. 3rd March, General Council Dinner, Batemans Bay.



Ray Sputore, President, ACCI, Dr Jeremy Johnson AM, Immediate Past President, ACCI and Lyall Gorman, Deputy President and Board Member, Business NSW. 3rd March, General Council Dinner, Batemans Bay.



Gillian Stapleton – CEO, Direct Selling Australia, Katie Hamer - Deputy President, Moruya Business Chamber, Richard Adams – President, Mogo Chamber of Commerce, The Hon Warwick Smith, Chairman – Advisory Board, Australian Capital Equity. 4th March, Cocktail Drinks at JJ's on the Marina.



Jason Falinski MP, Chair of the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue, Member for Mackellar and Claudia Sagripanti, CEO, Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia. 10th March, Breakfast with Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance at MinterEllison, Sydney.



Jason Falinski MP, Chair of the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue, Member for Mackellar and Wes Lambert, CEO, Restaurant & Catering Industry. 10th March, Breakfast with Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance at MinterEllison, Sydney.



The Hon John Barilaro MP, Deputy Premier of New South Wales and Natalie Turmine, Chief Executive Officer, Campbell Page. 12th March, Networking Breakfast at EISS.



The Hon John Barilaro MP, Deputy Premier of New South Wales and Mr Alexander Hutchison Chief Executive Officer Energy Industries Superannuation Scheme, 12th March, Networking Breakfast at EISS.



Lou Jardin, Managing Director, SPAR Australia, The Hon Trevor Evans MP, Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management and Dominique Lamb, CEO, NRA and Director, NRA Legal. 13th March, Networking Breakfast at JLL, Brisbane.



Amanda Rohan, General Manager, Policy & Advocacy, CCIQ, The Hon Trevor Evans MP, Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management & Dominique Lamb, CEO, NRA and Director, NRA Legal. 13th March, Networking Breakfast at JLL, Brisbane.



The Hon Trevor Evans MP, Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management and Stephen Conry AM, CEO - Australia, JLL 13th March, Networking Breakfast at JLL, Brisbane.

APRIL 2020



Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Federal Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business and Nicolle Jenkins, President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia. 6th April, Video Conference.



The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister. 22nd April, Video Conference.



The Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Matt Deaner, CEO Screen Producers Australia. 22nd April, Video Conference.



Greg Ireland, CEO, Chamber of Commerce NT and The Hon Christian Porter MP, Federal Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations. 24th April, Video Conference.

MAY 2020



Kate Carnell AO, Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman and James Voortman, CEO, AADA. 4th May, Video Conference.



Mike Lawrence, CEO, Customer Owned Banking Association Limited and Rod Sims, Chair, Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC). 5th May, Video Conference.



Justin Howden, Group Head, Global Government Affairs and Industry, H&H Group and The Hon Will Hodgman, Chair, Australian Business Growth Fund. 7th May, Video Conference.



Andrew Liveris, former CEO of Dow Chemical & member of the National Covid-19 Coordination Commission and Samantha Read, CEO, Chemistry Australia. 12th May, Video Conference.



The Hon Michael Sukkar MP, Federal Minister for Housing and Assistant Treasurer and Elizabeth McIntyre, Group CEO, Think Brick Australia. 18th May, Video Conference.



Nicola Grayson, CEO Consult Australia and The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Leader of the Australian Labor Party. 26th May Video Conference.



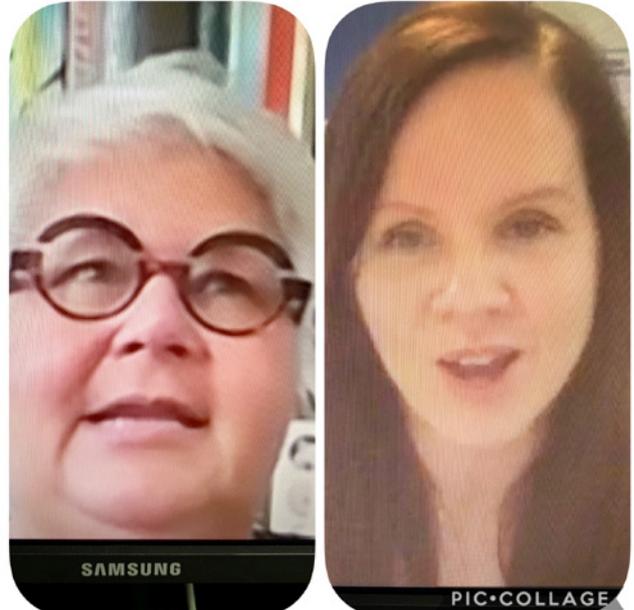
Barrie Elvish, CEO Fitness Australia and The Hon Greg Hunt MP, Minister for Health, Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service and Cabinet. 19th May, Video Conference.



Wednesday 20th May, The Hon Jim Chalmers MP, Federal Shadow Treasurer and Stephen Ferguson, CEO, Australian Hotels Association. 20th May, Video Conference.



Michael Apps, Executive Director, Bus Industry Confederation and The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Leader of the Australian Labor Party. 26th May, Video Conference.



Thursday 28th May, Charmaine Moldrich, CEO, Outdoor Media Association and Charlotte Tressler, Head of Treasury's Coronavirus Business Liaison Unit. 28th May, Video Conference.

JUNE 2020



The Hon Karen Andrews MP, Minister for Industry, Science and Technology and Ben Lazzaro, CEO, Australian Made Campaign Limited. 2nd June, Video Conference.



Senator Andrew Bragg, Senator for New South Wales and Author of the book 'Bad Egg: How to Fix Super' with members. 3rd June, Video Conference.



Christian Bennett, Group Head of Reputation, Government Relations and Industry Affairs, Woolworths and The Hon Arthur Sinodinos AO, Australia's Ambassador to the United States of America. 4th June, Video Conference.

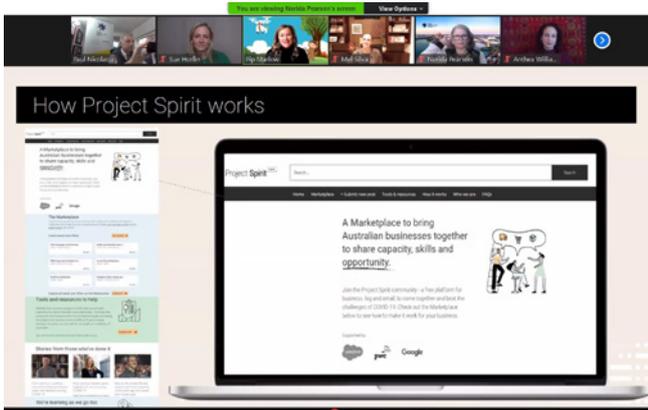


Diane Tate, CEO, AFIA and Christine Morgan, CEO of National Mental Health Commission. 12th June, Video Conference.



Kate Jenkins, Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner with members. 30th June, Video Conference Respect@Work National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces.

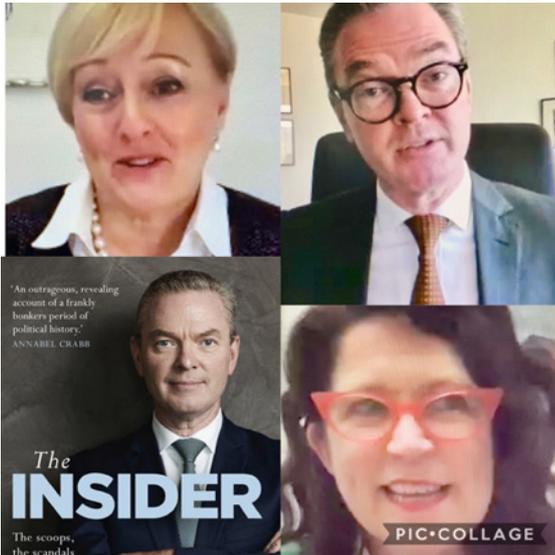
JULY 2020



Sue Horlin, Sydney Managing Partner, PwC, Pip Marlow, CEO, Salesforce Australia & NZ, and Melanie Silva, Managing Director, Google Australia and NZ. 8th July, Video Conference regarding Project Spirit.



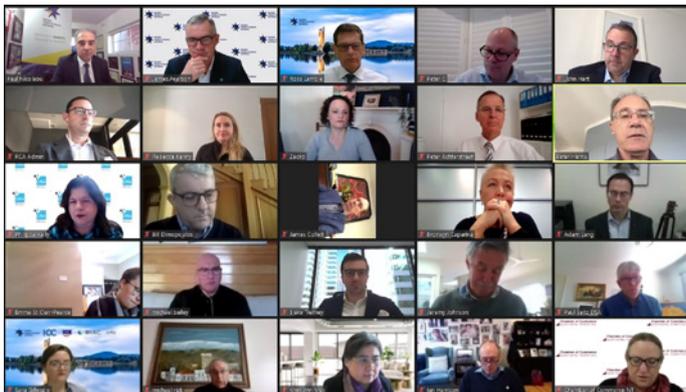
Melanie Silva, Managing Director, Google Australia and NZ, Pip Marlow, CEO, Salesforce Australia & NZ, Sue Horlin, Sydney Managing Partner, PwC and Linda Brown, CEO, Laureate Australia & New Zealand. 8th July, Video Conference.



Karyn Sobels, President, Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and The Hon Christopher Pyne, former Government Minister and Annabel Crabb, ABC's Chief Political Writer. 17th July, Virtual Book Launch.



Paul Damkjaer, CEO, CBFCA and The Hon Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Home Affairs. 24th July, Video Conference.

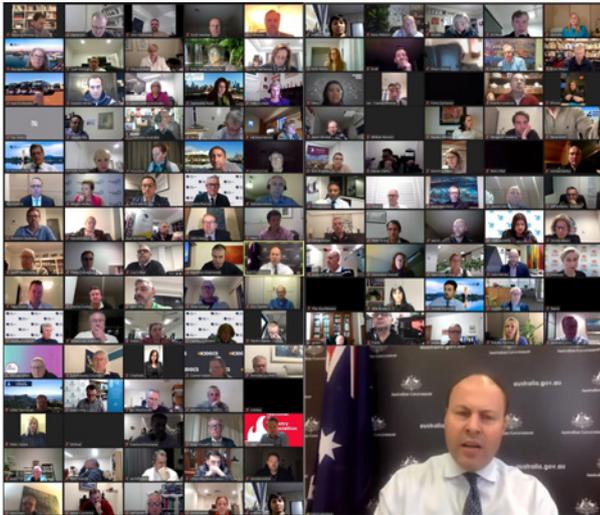


Peter Harris AO, Chief Executive Officer, NCC - National COVID-19 Commission (Advisory Board) with members. 30th July, Video Conference.



Peter Harris AO, Chief Executive Officer, NCC - National COVID-19 Commission (Advisory Board) and Michael Bailey, CEO, Tasmania Chamber of Commerce. 30th July, Video Conference.

AUGUST 2020



The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, Federal Treasurer among 500 business leaders. 4th August, Urgent update from the Treasurer in regards to the situation in Victoria.



John Winter, CEO, ARITA and Jason Falinski MP, Chair of the Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue. 7th August, Video Conference.



Adam Boyton, National Skills Commissioner and Troy Williams, CEO, Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA). 27th August, Video Conference.

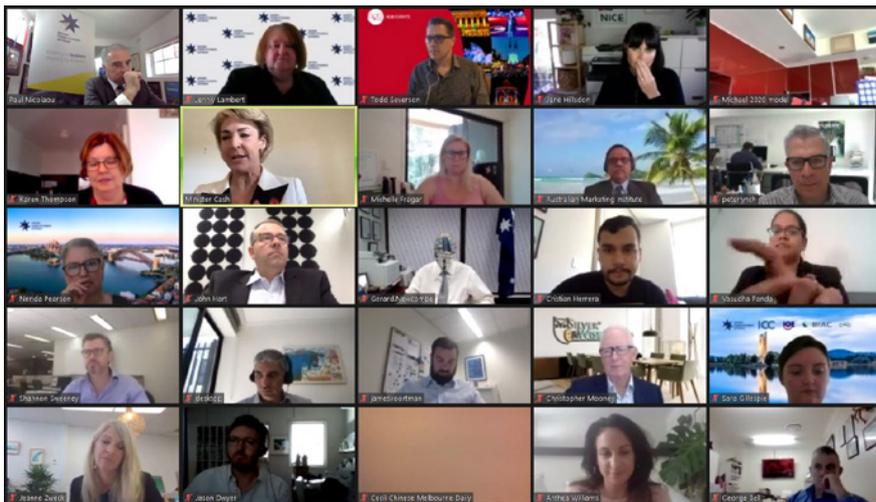


The Hon. Dr Kay Patterson AO, Age Discrimination Commissioner and members 28th August, Video Conference.

SEPTEMBER 2020



John Denton AO Secretary General, The International Chamber of Commerce with members and staff. 1st September, Video Conference.



Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business and members. 7th September, Video Conference in conjunction with AMI.



David Thodey AO, Deputy Chairman, National COVID-19 Commission Advisory Board. 15th September, Video Conference.



Australian
Chamber of Commerce
and Industry



2020

**ANNUAL REPORT
& BUSINESS REVIEW**