



Thursday, 7 May 2020
Issue 24.0

This week has seen the lifting of restrictions by some states and territories – Victoria, however, has stood firm in their approach to maintaining the status quo until Cabinet meets to discuss a review on Monday, 11 May. We will await further announcements with interest, but in the meantime, VACC has been busy advocating that Auto is Open.

Yesterday, we rolled out the first of our television commercials, featuring real life VACC Members, highlighting the range of auto services still available to the public. These adverts will run in both Victoria and Tasmania. My thanks go to the featured members for their time and support of our initiative. To find out more, watch the videos or get involved in the campaign, visit the VACC website [HERE](#).

Finally, I would encourage all members to download the COVIDSafe App [HERE](#). This is an important measure designed to fast track the resumption of services across our economy by providing up-to-date data. Those concerned with privacy can read more [HERE](#).

As always, continue to reach out to VACC with any issues or concerns. We're here to help.

1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Important IR Development: COVID – 19 amendments to the Vehicle Manufacturing, Repair, Services and Retail Award 2010

Members have received a Bulletin from VACC's IR department regarding proposed temporary amendments to the Vehicle Manufacturing, Repair, Services and Retail Award 2010 in response to COVID-19.

The objective of the temporary amendments is to preserve the ongoing viability of businesses and their employees **who are not entitled to JobKeeper**.

Unions and employer groups have reached agreement on the terms of an application to vary the award, which has been filed in the Fair Work Commission. A summary of changes can be read in the Bulletin [HERE](#), with VACC expecting an operative date of 30 June 2020.

Further information on the terms of the award variation will be circulated to members once the variation has been approved by the Fair Work Commission.

2. MEMBER SERVICES

Auto is Open campaign

As part of the Auto is Open campaign, VACC has developed a television advert for both Victoria and Tasmania (featuring member businesses), to further bolster community awareness that auto is open.

You can read more about the campaign and view the adverts [HERE](#).



Victorian COVID-19 Commercial Tenancies Legislation & Regulation

Law firm Maddox has released an explanation of the Act and Regulations associated with the National Cabinet Mandatory Code of Conduct – SME Commercial Leasing Principles During COVID-19 (Code).

In Victoria, it is the Act and the Regulations, rather than the Code that now govern the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants in relation to the commercial leasing principles that are to apply to address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Act and the Regulations also provide answers to many of the questions raised by the Code and provide landlords, tenants and practitioners with greater certainty regarding the practical and legal application of the leasing principles.

The article covers:

- Commencement of Regulations
- What is an 'eligible lease'
- Good Faith
- Process for Rent Relief
- Prohibition on rent increases
- Extension of Term
- Recovery of outgoings
- Payment of deferred rent
- Restrictions on rent recovery/termination
- Change in trading hours
- Confidentiality of information
- Dispute resolution
- Next steps

You can read the article [HERE](#).

VACC recommends members consult with a professional services firm or legal practitioner for any additional advice.

Reminder: free counselling available for VACC and TACC members

To help VACC and TACC members manage stress and their mental health, the Chamber is offering free, completely confidential, professional counselling services through Psychology Melbourne.

You can access to the program [HERE](#).

My Business Health hub

The Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman has published a comprehensive portal designed to assist businesses affected by COVID-19.



You can access the website [HERE](#).

3. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVID-19: Australia's Path to Recovery and Reform

On Monday 5 May, Treasurer Josh Frydenberg MP delivered a speech to the National Press Club of Australia addressing Australia's path to recovery and reform post COVID-19.

His address mentions:

- **Lifting restrictions**
National Cabinet has signalled that from this Friday, it will assess more opportunities for easing restrictions, building on decisions already taken to date, such as around elective surgery, or in some States, limited gatherings and visitations.
However, 15 conditions need to be satisfied before the easing of restrictions may be considered (such as resourcing and data analysis around testing and tracing, health system capacity, including the availability of masks, gowns, gloves and ventilators).
- **The pathway ahead**
Government's direct financial support is around \$200 billion or 10 percent of GDP.
The income shock caused by this crisis will also hit the revenue side, the totality of which will be revealed in the October Budget.
Key post COVID-19 reforms include: reskilling and upskilling, new infrastructure projects, regulatory reform to reduce the cost burden on business and tax and industrial relations.

Members can watch the address below, or read the full transcript [HERE](#).



Parliamentary inquiry begins into COVID-19 response

The Public Accounts and Estimates Committee has commenced a public inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the terms of reference for the inquiry, the Committee will consider the effectiveness of the Victorian Government approach in responding to this crisis.

The first round of public hearings will be held from 12 to 14 May and focus on the Government's health response and the impact of COVID-19 on Victoria's economy. Further public hearings will be held from 18 to 20 May, with a focus on education, justice and community safety, transport, and housing.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Understanding your privacy obligations to your staff

The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner has released a guide for employers to help entities regulated by the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) (Privacy Act) understand their privacy obligations in the context of the pandemic.

Key points

- Personal information should be used or disclosed on a 'need-to-know' basis
- Only the minimum amount of personal information reasonably necessary to prevent or manage COVID-19 should be collected, used or disclosed
- Consider taking steps now to notify staff of how their personal information will be handled in responding to any potential or confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace
- Ensure reasonable steps are in place to keep personal information secure, including where employees are working remotely.

You can read the full factsheet [HERE](#).

4. PREVIOUS UPDATE ISSUES

You can read previous Updates of COVID-19 [HERE](#).

Geoff Gwilym
Chief Executive Officer

Disclaimer: *The information gathered has been drawn from a number of sources and VACC strongly recommends that members revert to the primary source of information for any clarification.*