



Tuesday, 26 May 2020
Issue 29.0

Members will no doubt be pleased by the Premier's recent announcement indicating further easing of restrictions. Details of these steps are included in this Update.

I would also like to remind members to apply for the \$500 million Business Support Funding, which provides one off \$10,000 grants to eligible businesses. Entries close at 11.59pm 1 June (next Monday) so I encourage you to submit your application soon. You can do so [HERE](#).

Finally, a note to members that this Update will move to a weekly distribution going forward. Additional COVID-19 related bulletins will be circulated a case-by-case basis.

Should you have any questions or require any support, please always feel free to contact any member of the VACC team.

1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Prime Minister's National Press Club Speech

The Prime Minister addressed the National Press Club today, in a speech designed to outline how the Government intends to approach industrial relations reforms, in the context of recovering from the economic and jobs impacted by COVID-19. All indications are that Government will invite employer bodies to sit down with the ACTU to attempt a corporatist/tripartite approach to securing much needed change.

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

Update: WorkPac v Rossato decision

The Full Federal Court on Wednesday handed down its long-awaited [decision in Workpac v Rossato](#), which reconfirmed that casual employees working regular and systematic hours with "predictable periods of working time" are likely to be considered permanent employees, regardless of what their contract says and regardless of the payment of a casual loading.

WorkPac was ordered to pay Mr Rossato unpaid annual leave, personal leave, compassionate leave and public holiday payments, which the court found could not be set-off with the casual loading already paid in lieu of those entitlements – having ramifications for employers in similar situations.

VACC and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry have consistently called for a legislative fix to restore common sense to how casuals are engaged and paid. The Attorney-General, the Hon Christian Porter, has indicated he will consult with employer groups and unions to try to drive certainty into the system, and has said the Government will consider intervening in any High Court appeal.

VACC will update members on the implications of this decision shortly. Any immediate questions should be directed to VACC's IR department: 03 9829 1123.

A bulletin on this issue was published on Friday, 22 May and can be accessed [HERE](#).

2. GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easing of Victorian restrictions

On Sunday, Premier Daniel Andrews released the next phased approach, which includes the following:

Gatherings: Outdoors 10 people including people from the same household. Indoors/ Households 5 people in addition to normal residents of household.

Weddings: 10 people in addition to couple and celebrant.

Funerals: 20 Indoors, but 5 if held in household; 30 Outdoors excluding people who run the service.

Places of Worship: small ceremonies of up to 10 people, excl. personnel required to run service.

Note need to keep record of contact details of each guest for weddings, funerals and religious ceremonies.

Work: Work at home unless not possible. Workplaces should develop a COVID-19 plan in accordance with NCCC and Safe Work Aust. guidance.

Open: community facilities can reopen for essential services or support group, Auction Houses, Open house inspections, real estate auctions, personal training and boot camps (no shared equipment) Whenever possible, operators must keep contact details of participants.

Travel: Allow hiking, fishing, hunting, prospecting, diving, boating and other recreational activities on public land. Only for daytime activity (no camping).

Members can read the full media release [HERE](#).

State Revenue Office to publish temporary rules for LMCT's that have been impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19)

As a result of ongoing dialogue between VACC and the Victorian Government, VACC can advise that the State Revenue Office (SRO) will publish temporary rules for LMCTs who have been impacted by coronavirus (COVID-19).

More specifically, the current length of ownership rule (i.e. the demonstrator vehicle needs to be held for no longer than 12 months after it was initially registered in the name of the LMCT as a demonstrator vehicle) will be temporarily adjusted, so that a motor vehicle can be considered as being used solely, or primarily, as a demonstrator vehicle or service demonstrator vehicle (where it has been held for up to 18 months after it was initially registered in the name of the LMCT).

This temporary 18 month rule will apply for all vehicles registered as a demonstrator or service demonstrator vehicle by an LMCT between 1 March 2019 (1 July 2019 for service demonstrator vehicles) and 30 September 2020. The normal 12-month rule will apply to vehicles registered after this date.

By providing an extended time period, SRO believe this should assist VACC members be able to comply with the demonstrator/special demonstrator vehicle conditions.

SRO is organising their formal communication regarding this change. VACC will distribute to industry as soon as it is available.

Upskill My Business: Access to free online short courses and training events

As previously advised, the Victorian Government is providing businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic free access to top online short courses and training events.

The Government has partnered with Deakin University, La Trobe University, RMIT, VCCI and Fair Work Australia to deliver this initiative.

Regional businesses are being further supported by the Government's initiatives to assist them to transition to the digital economy.

Members can access further information [HERE](#).

State and territory roadmaps

The attached document provides a summary of all state and territories' stepped plans across the high-level 3-step framework recently released by national Cabinet.

You can download the roadmaps [HERE](#).

COVID-19 Small and Medium Business Package Update

NBN Australia is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing up to \$50 million to assist phone and internet providers to support small and medium businesses.

To help Australians respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, NBN is providing financial assistance to phone and internet providers to support small and medium businesses. Designed to support businesses in financial hardship, this funding will help phone and internet providers keep customers connected in these difficult times. Participating phone and internet providers will establish their own offers in relation to nbn's financial hardship support offer. Download more info [HERE](#).

3. WORKPLACE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

New COVID-19 guidance has been published on the Safe Work Australia website, including:

- Cleaning – updates to guidance for all industries
- Office – new guidance on [hot-desking and activity-based work arrangements](#)
- Retail – new guidance on [changing rooms](#)

SWA [guidance on lifts](#) has been updated to provide extra clarification that:

- A health risk for COVID-19 exists from riding in a lift
- 4 square metres per person is not required within a lift, but that users of lifts must still maintain physical distancing, to the extent possible, and

The guidance has also been supplemented with additional information to assist employers and building managers to take a more holistic approach to managing the use of lifts, including managing demand and traffic flows in peak periods, ensuring good hygiene in and around lifts and increased cleaning of high touchpoints.

4. MEMBER SERVICES

Coming Soon – Grow with Google Webinars

Grow with Google OnAir will stream from the 9th - 17th June with topical content for everyone from dedicated small business sessions, to sessions for jobseekers, educators and more. Individuals will have the opportunity to ask questions with live moderation taking place. The series of seven webinars will cover a variety of topics listed below:

1. Tips for collaborating, meeting and working remotely
2. Tips to stay connected with your non-profit community
3. Connecting with customers online with Google
4. How to help your business stand out and show up online
5. Essential skills for job hunting in 2020
6. Teaching AI in the classroom
7. Fundamental tools for journalists from Google News Initiative

Registrations will open soon.

Mastercard Announcement

Mastercard and Ethoca announced a new support package for all retailers in Australia to help tackle fraud and chargebacks. The offer will include free access to fraud and chargeback dispute resolution service Ethoca Alerts until 31 July 2020.

Any retailer operating in Australia that processes card-not-present transactions either online, over the phone or via the mail, and receives more than 10 chargebacks per month on average would benefit from this product.

Members can read more [HERE](#).

5. 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.*