



A message from the CEO

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update 30/3

Today, the Federal Government announced its biggest and most significant financial assistance package to date. This package will be a welcome sight to many of you and will greatly assist in the retention of staff and apprentices throughout this difficult period.

Scott Morrison announces \$130 billion wage subsidy package

The Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, has announced a \$1,500 per fortnight "Job Keeper" payment for employers to keep their staff employed over the next six months as part of its \$130 billion plan.

The "Job Keeper" payments will be available for the retention of full-time and part-time workers, sole traders, and also casuals who have been with their employer for 12 months or more. The payment will also be available to employers who stood down employees as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.

Employers must elect to participate in the scheme. They will need to make an application to the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and demonstrate to the ATO that they are keeping the employee on. Eligibility will be based on businesses with a decrease in turnover of 30 per cent and businesses with more than \$1 billion in turnover must demonstrate a decrease in turnover of 50%.

Payments will flow from the first week of May but will be backdated from to today.

The Federal Government has supplied us with a number of information fact sheets that outline the plan. Click on the links below to access these:

- [Job Keeper Payment - Information for Employers](#)
- [Job Keeper Payment - Information for Employees](#)
- [Supporting Businesses to Retain Jobs](#)

Many details are yet to be revealed, including the interface with existing apprentice incentives, however we will continue to update members and hosts of our Group Training apprentices as we learn more about this unprecedented measure. Although Group Training Organisations (GTO) are classed as an employer, how the subsidy will be passed on will be largely determined by the type of employment relationship and / or contract we have with a host. We are working through the details but we will be passing 100 per cent of this onto eligible hosts.

MTA's across Australia have been lobbying the Federal Government for a more complete plan that better supports larger businesses and this is a good step towards achieving this.

State Government grant contacts

Last Thursday, the State Government announced that \$300 million has been made available through the Business and Jobs Support Fund to assist individual businesses and industry sectors that are directly affected by the Coronavirus through a 'rapid assessment panel'. The MTA is examining how best to access this fund.

Our proposal will be based on what will support the most amount of members. If you are interested in receiving support from the package, the State Government has some questions below that will assist us to complete each application:

- How the current restrictions are affecting your operations – e.g. forced shutdown, downturn in trade
- The size of your operation – e.g. workforce before the restrictions and after
- Impact on your cash flows
- How existing Commonwealth and State support packages already announced help your operations
- What specific issues you are worried about – e.g. paying your rent, regulatory requirements that are difficult to meet in the current environment, debt obligations or other issues

[Click here](#) to provide our Industry and Government Engagement Manager, Kaes Cillessen, with the above information to support our applications on behalf of the automotive industry.

Moratorium on commercial and residential evictions

The Prime Minister also announced a moratorium on commercial and residential evictions for at least six months. While further details are expected to be released soon, he is encouraging businesses, landlords and banks to come together to work through the issues faced in an effort to help businesses, like yours, through this difficult period.

If you lease your premises or are facing stress with loan repayments, please speak with your landlord or bank about the options available to you.

Federal Government healthcare package announced

A \$1.1 billion package targeted at Medicare, mental health services and domestic violence was also revealed yesterday by the Federal Government and we will keep you informed on how your employees can benefit as this scheme is rolled out. The scheme includes:

- \$669 million for Medicare Telehealth
- \$159 million for domestic violence support
- \$74 million in mental health support
- \$200 million in emergency relief for charities and organisation providing food relief

Coronavirus App released

The Federal Government released a Coronavirus Australia App on the weekend which contains a number of useful resources including a symptoms checker, latest news from the government, rules and regulations and government contacts.

The app is available for free through App stores for Apple devices and Google Play for Android devices.

Remember, the MTA is updating our COVID-19 portal daily which contains information tailored to automotive businesses outlining the latest in government assistance, workplace relations and industry advice. [Click here](#) to access the portal.

Paul Unerkov
MTA CEO