

Important Information for the Douglas Tourism Industry

Last updated 24/03/2020

We will be sending out updates every couple of days to consolidate and share with members the enormous amount of information and support mechanisms that are being developed by agencies across Australia to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Click on the links below to be taken to the latest information from each sector.

Look after yourselves in these challenging times and if you would like to discuss anything please do not hesitate to give us a call.

You will be alerted of further updates, including important announcements via the Tourism Port Douglas Daintree Industry page and through regular member EDM's.

Yours in Tourism,

Tara, Mikala and Fiona

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Tourism Port Douglas Daintree Update

Important Message – 24/03/2020

QUEENSLAND'S border will be closed from midnight, Wednesday 25/03/2020

Anyone travelling into Queensland will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days regardless if they are sick or not.

It's understood freight will be exempt.

Australian Government – Essential information as at 5:00pm Monday 23rd March

- Pubs, licensed clubs and hotels (excluding accommodation), places of worship, gyms, indoor sporting venues, cinemas, casinos to close from midday Monday, March 23. Restaurants and cafes to offer takeaway only. Schools and supermarkets can remain open. [Read more.](#)
- To help stop the spread of coronavirus, stay 1.5 metres away from others where possible, wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face and if sick, stay home. [Read more.](#)
- Non-essential mass gatherings are banned for groups of more than 500 people outdoors, or more than 100 indoors. [Read more.](#)
- There are restrictions on visitors to Residential Aged Care Facilities to protect older Australians. Please check with individual facilities for further information.
- From 9pm AEDT 20 March 2020, our borders are closed except for Australian citizens, residents and immediate family members. All arrivals into Australia are required to self-isolate for 14 days, either at home or in a hotel. [Read more.](#)

CEO Update – 23/03/2020

Our hearts are aching watching our beloved Douglas tourism industry come to a standstill. We hope you are all keeping your heads above water in these very uncertain times.

I want to assure you that the TPDD team is here to support you through these unprecedented times and we are doing everything we can to keep you updated, share official advice and provide resources that may assist. With this in mind we have developed a dedicated page on our website where the latest updates will be available to you

<https://www.visitportdouglasdaintree.com/covid-19-updates>

TPDD continues to monitor our markets and adjust our marketing plans to make sure once all current restrictions have been removed, we are ready to hit the ground running to make sure Douglas is first choice for travellers.

Please reach out to the TPDD team at any time.



CEO Update – 17/03/2020

The Douglas Shire is reeling from the escalation of measures to contain the global pandemic, the Coronavirus (COVID-19). We are in unprecedented times with our industry taking one hit after another as international travel comes to a standstill, domestic uncertainty sees upcoming Easter bookings soften and aviation capacity diminishing. This is a fast-moving environment with the situation and its impact changing quickly. Below we have a selection of resources to assist TPDD members in reducing the inevitable impact to their business and be aware of the resources available and government initiatives that are being developed to help businesses survive and start thinking about their recovery plans for the coming months.

The strategy at present is to pull back on marketing, but not pull out. With this in mind, TPDD will be postponing some of the planned tactical activity that was scheduled to take place in March and April until May and June to make sure we are on the front foot with targeted messaging and activities ready to go. Our destination marketing continues with a focus on the drive market to try stimulating regional visitation over the Easter period and beyond; ongoing digital messaging and preparing our recovery response when the situation changes.

Agility and collaboration, the catch phrases of recent years, are going to be critical to the destinations and industries recovery. TPDD is here to support the Douglas tourism industry through this unprecedented situation and will continue to provide updates as they come through while developing a robust recovery plan in alignment with stakeholders to get the destination front of mind when the world resumes travel planning

Tourism Australia

Update - 24/03/2020 from Phillipa Harrison Managing Director

Australian Governments Respond – restrictions & support

Australian Governments have implemented further restrictions to slow the spread of the coronavirus, while at the same time introducing measures to support jobs, businesses and the economy through the crisis. There's been a lot to absorb, so at the bottom of this note is quite a lengthy summary.

Government Hotline for more information - 13 28 46

The Federal Government has established an advice hotline for small and medium-sized businesses (13 28 46).

Domestic Travel - avoid non-essential

You will have all seen the announcement for all non-essential travel to be avoided, made in the lead up to the school holidays.

TA's One Stop Shop for Industry Support – Updated Daily

To help you navigate the change and access any financial support available, we have created a One-Stop-Shop of information on our [website](#).

TA Webinars Every Friday – Invites to come

Now that there is so much information out there as people face a mountain of decisions, and work remotely, we will be starting weekly webinars each Friday. This will start off with information specific to the tourism sector from experts ranging from what support is out there for the Industry, to how to keep marketing and manage social media, and to how to best manage mental health. An invite will come out over the next day.

Update - 19/03/2020

5 steps businesses can take

In the midst of managing the business impacts of the crisis, here are 5 things you might want to think about:

1. Make sure you are following health and safety guidance from the Department of Health.
2. Communicate what health and safety measures you are taking in your business to your customers and partners.
3. The Department of Health has launched a national campaign to inform all Australians about the coronavirus. They have developed a range of resources for businesses to use, find out more here.
4. The Australian, State and Territory Governments have announced a series of measures to support businesses and individuals during this difficult time. Find out more here.
5. Look after your mental health and reach out if you need help.



Update – 17/03/2020

Tourism Australia are continuing to assess all their activities on a day by day basis in the current environment. All international campaign activity aimed at driving immediate bookings is being suspended. Any activities focused on shaping longer term consumer desire to visit Australia in the future are constantly under review to ensure their appropriateness and effectiveness. TA will provide an update in coming days in relation to ATE and Domestic campaign activities.

This morning The Palaszczuk Government announced that it will create a new \$500 million loan facility, interest free for the first 12 months, to support businesses to keep Queenslanders in work and extend the coronavirus payroll tax deferral to all businesses across the state. [Read the full media release here.](#)

Tourism Tropical North Queensland

Update -24/03/2020 from Mark Olsen CEO

Tourism Tropical North Queensland was created 45 years ago, because we are greater when we are together.

Now more than ever our industry needs to pull together to support each other and weather the storm of global uncertainty, so that we can come out the other side stronger than if we face the challenges alone.

TTNQ is acutely aware of the size of the challenge of the weeks and months ahead. Every business in our region will be affected. Our role continues to be as the amplifier of the voice of the industry, the voice of compassion, the voice of reason, the voice of inspiration and the voice of hope. When the globe emerges from this worldwide health emergency, people will be looking for places they can reconnect, revitalise and renew. Places they can just breath, and that place is here in Cairns and Great Barrier Reef.

For us to recover we need to act now to stop the spread so that we can be ready to respond. That means immediately implementing the social distancing policy and sticking to it. Let's respond now, to be ready later to welcome the world with open arms.

TTNQ will be shifting its focus from destination awareness and conversion to industry support and inspiration. We will do this through five new initiatives across the business:

1) Your Voice

TTNQ will join Advance Cairns, Cairns Chamber of Commerce, Cairns Regional Council and other key local bodies on an Economic Response and Recovery Steering Committee to ensure the voice of tourism is being heard at all levels of Government. Industry is invited to share ideas and concerns directly with me so your voice can be heard. We will establish a list of Industry Advocacy Priorities and share these with you. We will share industry updates by video three times a week.

2) Supporting our People

TTNQ will work with the key employment agencies to ensure that staff who are looking for work locally are being supported. We will be working with other sectors that have short-term staffing needs to help connect our people with short term opportunities so they can return when we recover.

3) Inspire and Engage

TTNQ will be moving our messaging to inspirational content creation and invite our members to share stories, live feeds and updates as well as awesome social media content that we can share through our channels. We will be aiming to build our global audience of loyal followers ready to share our story. We are keen to co-create content with you and work with your teams to inspire them around the brand through webinars.

4) Foundations of Recovery

TTNQ is building our recovery marketing platform ensuring that when visitors, starting with locals and expanding globally, are ready and it is safe to return to travelling that we are already top of their list of places to visit. We will map out and share our approach and would be keen to get your input and involvement.

5) Care for our Community

TTNQ is committed to being a positive contributor to our community through our local purchasing policy, contributing to community-based activities that help to lift our spirits in these difficult times, and working with Councils and the LTOs to offer our support to local initiatives that build stronger community spirit and support.

TTNQ's purpose is to support our industry to be successful, sustainable and resilient. We are here to support our industry through these turbulent times and if you think there is something more we could do please don't hesitate to let me know by contacting me on ceo@ttnq.org.au.

TTNQ will continue to give updated advice on the coronavirus crisis and where you can access business support on our corporate website.

Wendy Morris – Chair of TTNQ and Mark Olsen CEO of TTNQ both did a video address to members which you can view by clicking on their names below.

[Wendy](#)

[Mark](#)

Update – 17/03/2020

The Board and CEO of TTNQ, on the invitation of Federal Member for Leichhardt Warren Entsch, meet with the Federal Tourism Minister Simon Birmingham yesterday along with Champion members, Advance Cairns and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce to discuss the current situation and how the Federal Government can shape its response.

Five key themes were identified with a range of immediate response and mid-term recovery measures discussed. The key themes and responses included:

- Managing the message
- Supporting staff short term
- Retaining talent: Waiving GST
- Maintaining the diversity of businesses in the region: Interest free loans
- Driving future demand

[Click here](#) to read the full released of what was discussed.

ATEC – North Queensland Branch

Update – 23/03/2020

Update from ATEC CEO – Peter Shelley

We find ourselves in an unprecedented crisis. Businesses on their knees, revenues instantly gone and the challenge of passengers trying to find their way home before the border's close tonight. ATEC is doing what we can to support you, including strong advocacy to Governments across the country to urgently deliver practical financial support for the many businesses under pressure. Today, we shared an open letter to the PM and Federal Ministers, and we've written to every Premier and Chief Minister across the country to urgently throw their support in behind our industry.

We are here, we are listening and acting on your behalf and hope that when this all passes, we will be ready to [#bringbackbetter](#) and rebuild this great industry of ours.

Calls for government support

We've been really pushing hard for government to step up for our industry and deliver practical measures which will help keep doors open and staff employed. The initial federal stimulus package, whilst welcomed, did little to offer any real support as the situation escalated rapidly and access to funds has been slow. Our open letter to Government was widely circulated today, and ATEC has written to every Premier and Chief Minister calling for urgent and immediate support.

ATEC COVID-19 webinar

COVID-19 Update Webinar (save the date)

ATEC will be running COVID-19 industry update via webinar next week to help all members stay up-to-date with the rapidly changing circumstances, and the impact the virus is having on our industry. The webinar will feature senior presenters from the Department of Health (an update on the spread of the virus), the Government Treasury (an overview of the Government stimulus package), and Tourism Australia (an update on the impact the virus is having on our inbound tourism sector).

Details

When: Wednesday 25 March

Time: 1.00 – 2.00 pm (EDT)

Registration to open on Monday 23 March

Borders are closed

Australia is closing its borders to all non-citizens and non-residents. The entry ban takes effect from 9pm AEDT Friday, 20 March 2020, with exemptions only for Australian citizens, permanent residents and their immediate family, including spouses, legal guardians and dependants. New Zealand citizens who live in Australia as Australian residents are also exempt, as are New Zealanders transiting to New Zealand. Exemptions for Pacific Islanders transiting to their home countries will continue to apply. Australian citizens and permanent residents and those exempt from our entry restrictions will continue to be subject to a strict 14 days self-isolation.

Government has indicated that this will be reviewed 'weekly'.

Battening down the hatches

We are heartened to hear plenty of positivity about what recovery looks like when it arrives. But in the meantime, we are making sure we apply the necessary prudent fiscal measures here at ATEC as well. All travel and any non-essential expenditure have been frozen, and we have a sensible crisis management plan activated. And of course, reach out for a chat either via phone or email anytime.

Douglas Shire Council

Update – 24/03/2020

Douglas libraries and Mossman Pool will close from **5pm on Wednesday** until further notice as a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of COVID-19 in Douglas Shire.

Douglas Shire Council has also announced several other measures, including changes to its customer service centres, in line with expert health advice and social distancing restrictions announced by the Federal Government.

The Port Douglas Markets are cancelled, and Mossman Nursery is closed until further notice.

The Bloomfield Track is closed at Emmagen Creek, north of Cape Tribulation, until further notice as part of the State Government's travel restrictions to the Cape.

Council is encouraging anyone who may have symptoms to avoid public areas and practice social distancing to save lives.

Read full details here: <https://bit.ly/3bpeD9n>

As a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of COVID-19, Council has cancelled and made changes to regular events, programs and initiatives, effective immediately.

ACTIVE8 FREE FITNESS

- Aquafit
- Seniors Make a Splash
- Seniors Movement & Parkour
- Zumba
- Tai Chi
- Just Start Fitness

DOUGLAS LIBRARIES

- Baby Rhyme Time
- Storytime
- Tech-Savvy Senior Workshops
- Lego & K'Nex
- Music & Song

MOSSMAN POOL

- Learn to Swim classes
- Aquafit
- Club training & public swimming will continue with additional measures to ensure the safety of patrons.

ANZAC DAY



✘ RSL Qld advised Sub Branches to cancel commemorations. The Mossman Sub Branch is recommending that residents tune into the national dawn service on television or radio on April 25.

PORT DOUGLAS MARKETS

☑ Continue to operate for now. Council is closely monitoring the situation and senior management is meeting regularly to review business operations and service delivery.

What is happening in Aviation?

Update 23/03/2020

Aviation is changing on a daily if not hourly basis and the Australian Government has advised all Australian not to travel at this time – at this stage we are aware of the following changes to routes into Cairns.

International

The borders are now closed, and international travel is no longer an option.

Qantas:

Has announced the following changes to their services:

Sydney – Cairns route will drop from 14 flights to 7.

Brisbane - Cairns route will drop form 38 flights to 14

Services from Cairns to Hamilton Island, Melbourne and Uluru have been suspended.

<https://www.qantas.com/au/en/travel-info/travel-updates/coronavirus/qantas-australian-domestic-network-changes.html>

Jetstar:

Brisbane – Cairns route has been suspended

Adelaide – Cairns route has been suspended

Perth – Cairns route has been suspended

Tiger:

Brisbane – Cairns route will be suspended from April 1 to June 30.

Sydney – Cairns route will be cancelled as of April 1.

Virgin:

The following flights changes take place from April 1 to June 14.

Melbourne – Cairns route has been suspended

Sydney – Cairns route has been suspended



Queensland Health

Update - 17/03/2020

Queensland Health has created the below guides to assist people with the management of the outbreak and we encourage all members to read the below:

[COVID-19 information for hotels and hotel staff:](#)

[COVID-19 isolation guidance:](#)

The most current information in relation to COVID-19 is available via the Queensland Government website, however, this should be checked regularly:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19>

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland

Update – 19/03/2020

CCIQ have come up with a number of resources to assist businesses during these challenging times – please see below;

[Coronavirus Resource Centre](#)

You will find a series of resources, guides and news to help you get prepared for the coronavirus.

[COVID-19 Webinar Series](#)

Register online for coronavirus-specific webinars on managing your people, working remotely, tips in reducing your operating costs, and government support.

[COVID-19 Employer Guide](#)

If you haven't already, download the employer guide on how to manage your workplace in the face of an outbreak.

[FREE COVID-19 Templates](#)

We have compiled the top HR paperwork you need to provide a safe and compliant working environment for your staff.

Update – 17/03/2020

CCIQ has created a dedicated web resource with COVID-19 specific response content covering; managing staff, government support, cutting costs, remote working and employer assistance support, [click here to learn more](#).

Government Support

Update – 23/03/2020

Coronavirus business support

If your business has been affected by the coronavirus, we have a team of dedicated customer representatives who can help you on [13 28 46](tel:132846). Our dedicated team will be available between 7am - 9pm across Australia, Monday to Sunday.

Updated Information – business.gov.au

The Australian Government has announced additional measures to support businesses impacted by the coronavirus.

Additional announcements include:

[Boosting cash flow for employers](#)

Up to \$100,000 to eligible small and medium-sized businesses, and not for-profits (NFPs) that employ people, with a minimum payment of \$20,000

Under the enhanced scheme, employers will receive a payment equal to 100 per cent of their salary and wages withheld (up from 50 per cent), with the maximum payment being increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000. In addition, the minimum payment is being increased from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

An additional payment is also being introduced in the July – October 2020 period. Eligible entities will receive an additional payment equal to the total of all of the Boosting Cash Flow for Employers payments they have received. This means that eligible entities will receive at least \$20,000 up to a total of \$100,000 under both payments.

[Temporary Flexibility in the Corporations Act 2001](#)

Temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand on a company and the time companies have to respond to statutory demands they receive.

The ATO will tailor solutions for owners or directors of business that are currently struggling due to the Coronavirus, including temporary reduction of payments or deferrals, or withholding enforcement actions including Director Penalty Notices and wind-ups.

[Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme](#)

The Government will provide a guarantee of 50 per cent to SME lenders to support new short-term unsecured loans to SMEs. The Scheme will guarantee up to \$40 billion of new lending.

The Government is cutting red tape by providing a temporary exemption from responsible lending obligations for lenders providing credit to existing small business customers. This reform will help small businesses get access to credit quickly and efficiently.

[Reserve Bank of Australia – Term Funding Facility for the Banking System](#)

Banks will have access to at least \$90 billion in funding at a fixed interest rate of 0.25 per cent.

This will reinforce the benefits of a low cash rate by reducing funding costs for banks, which in turn will help reduce interest rates for borrowers. To encourage lending to businesses, the facility offers additional low-cost funding to banks if they expand their business lending, with particular incentives applying to new loans to SMEs.

The Government is providing the Australian Office of Financial Management (AOFM) with \$15 billion to invest in structured finance markets used by smaller lenders. This program will assist smaller lenders, who will not benefit from the RBA's term funding facility, to maintain access to

funding and support competition in the lending market. This in turn will help keep mortgages and other borrowing costs for businesses low.

Income Support for Individuals

Over the next six months, the Government is temporarily expanding eligibility to income support payments and establishing a new, time-limited Coronavirus supplement to be paid at a rate of \$550 per fortnight.

Visit [Services Australia](#) for further information on assistance for individuals.

Visit business.gov.au for details on the complete assistance available:

[Support available for sole traders](#)

[Support available for employers](#)

[Support available for companies](#)

Supporting sole traders through the effects of Coronavirus

The Morrison Government is expanding the eligibility criteria for JobSeeker Payment to support sole traders and Australians who are self-employed if their income is negatively affected by the economic impact of the Coronavirus.

Under temporary changes to social security rules sole traders will be encouraged to keep their business operating but may be able to access income support should their earnings take a significant hit.

Minister for Families and Social Services Anne Ruston said the changes mean that sole traders who were now eligible for JobSeeker or Youth Allowance (other) would also receive the \$550 fortnightly Coronavirus supplement.

Refer to [MyGov](#) for up to date details.

Update – 19/03/2020

The Queensland Government earlier this week announced that it will create a new \$500 million loan facility, interest-free for the first 12 months, to support businesses and keep Queenslanders in work. It will also extend the coronavirus payroll tax deferral to all businesses across the state. [Find out more here](#)

This support is in addition to the \$27.25m Immediate [Industry Recovery Package](#) announced last month

Domestic Travel Update – Parker Travel Collection

Update -23/03/2020

Domestic Trade Summary

The majority of the domestic market trade has advised that whilst retail stores will be remaining open at present, no marketing/advertising campaigns will be undertaken in the short term to try and revive business.

Flight Centre - all marketing on hold for March and April with future activity to be constantly reviewed. Will look to feature product specials online, presently in recovery plan with domestic expected to bounce back first and will be their priority.

Helloworld - no plans as yet on when active marketing or advertising will be taking place. Retail stores will focus on drive market within their own region with specials and offers. Helloworld product seeking all products to roll over this season rates for 2021-22 to encourage clients to postpone instead of cancel. This is recommended, but ensure you update your seasons for 2021-22 with the school holidays.

Ignite - a core part of much of TTNQ advertising over the last 12 months, the TTNQ campaign scheduled for 1 April has been postponed to 1 May

Updates from Local Businesses

Update - 24/03/2020

NB - TPDD is in the process of creating a dedicated page on their website where will have a comprehensive list of restaurants offering takeaway along with their menus and ordering details. As soon as we have this up and running, we will supply you with the details.

Restaurants:

Offering Takeaway

Zinc - is closed to the public but still offering takeaway and delivery -order online www.zincportdouglas.com

Beach Shack Port Douglas - closed Monday and Tuesday but still offering takeaway and delivery on the other day

N17 Burger Co - open form 11am - 9pm takeaway only.

Rattle n Hum - closed until further notice offering takeaway from 5pm

Whileaway - closed to the public, still offering takeaway coffee and snacks.

Sparrow - closed to the public, still offering takeaway coffee which are available to be ordered online

Barrier Reef Tavern - restaurant is closed to the public but offering takeaway. Bottle shop remains open as per usual.

Café Fresq - currently offering takeaway.

Grant Street Kitchen - open for takeaway only.

Monkey Joes - closed to the public but open for takeaway and delivery.

Surfy Port Douglas - open for takeaway and delivery text orders 0400 409 693

Dave's Takeaway - open for takeaway phone 07 4099 4474

Han Court Chinese - open for takeaway and delivery

Siam by the Sea - open for takeaway and delivery

Choo Choo's at the Marina - open for takeaway from 8am - 1pm

Toast Sandwich Bar - open for takeaway and delivery on Macrossan Street

Chilli's Pizza & Trattoria - open for takeaway and delivery Tuesday - Sunday call 4099 4444 or 0423 510 720

Closed

Salsa Bar & Grill - closed until further notice

Watergate Port Douglas - closed until further notice.

The Tin Shed Port Douglas - closed until further notice.

St Crispin's Café - closed until further notice

High Tide - closed until further notice - another update to come in the next day.

Melaleuca - closed until further notice.

Barbados - closed until further notice

Lure Restaurant - closed until further notice

Little Larder - closed until further notice

Hemingways Brewery - closed until further notice

Iron Bar - closed until further notice

Tiki Bar @Plantation Resort - closed until further notice

Touring:

Calypso Reef Cruises - Tours as suspending until further notice.

The Wildlife Habitat – closed until further notice.
Hook-A-Barra – is closed to the general public effective immediately.
Rainforest Station – is closed until further notice.
Koala Gardens – is closed until further notice.
Port Douglas Tourist Information Centre and Adventure Centre – closed as of 24/03/20 until further notice.
Sailaway Reef Charters – closed until further notice.
Brett's Kuranda Tours and Outback Tasting Adventures – closed until further notice
Hartley's Crocodile Adventures – will close at 5pm Wednesday 25th March until further notice
Lady Douglas - closed until further notice.
Solar Whisper – closed until further notice.
Avis/Budget – closed until further notice.
Wavelength - Will now be offering private and shared charters for those who wish to snorkel the Great Barrier Reef!

Services:

All essential services will remain open at this point in time.

Port Douglas Markets – closed until further notice

Mossman Pool – closed as of 5pm 24/03/20

Mossman Nursery – closed until further notice

Douglas Libraries – closed until further notice

Our apologies if we have missed anyone we are trying to keep up with the announcements as they are made via social media. If your operation has closed or changed hours please get in touch with Mikala info@visitportdouglasdaintree.com so that we can get our list us up to date as possible

Update – 19/03/2020

Mossman Gorge Centre – in response to COVID-19, the Queensland Government is taking proactive steps to reduce potential risks to vulnerable people in our community. As a result, Mossman Gorge in Daintree National Park will be closed until further notice.

Rainforestation Nature Park – Effective immediately RFS will be closed every Sunday until further notice.

Skyrail Rainforest Cable Way - Effective immediately Skyrail will be closed every Sunday until further notice.

AquaQuest - Entrada Group will cease operating AquaQuest out of Port Douglas, with immediate effect.

Local Events Postponed

Update - 23/03/2020

Port Douglas Race Week

After much discussion on the current circumstances the Port Douglas Yacht Club faces with the Covid-19 virus spread, the difficult decision to suspend Quicksilver Port Douglas Race Week 2020 has been made by the Committee.

Update - 19/03/2020

Port Douglas Carnivale

Port Douglas Carnivale 2020 has been postponed in line with recommendations from the Federal Government on non-essential mass gatherings. Douglas Shire Council will investigate the possibility of holding aspects of the festival, originally scheduled for May this year, as part of its economic recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic at a future date.

Ironman Cairns

The 2020 Cairns Airport IRONMAN Asia-Pacific Championship Cairns and IRONMAN 70.3 Cairns will not take place as planned on June 7, 2020. They are working to secure a new race date, visit www.ironman.com/im-cairns for the latest information.

Looking after yourself in these Challenging Times

Update - 19/03/2020

Department of Health

The Australian Government has announced a COVID-19 National Health Plan – Primary Care – Bulk Billed MBS Telehealth Services.

The temporary Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) items will allow doctors, nurses, midwives and mental health professionals to deliver services via telehealth provided those services are bulk billed.

The new MBS items will allow people to access essential health services in their home while they undergo self-isolation or quarantine and reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for vulnerable people in the community. This is a temporary six-month measure. [Click here to view the fact sheet.](#)

Beyond Blue

During difficult times, it's important to take every opportunity to support your mental health and wellbeing. Beyond Blue have shared some tips below for how you can cope with the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Members of the Beyond Blue community continue to support one another at their dedicated 'Coping with the coronavirus' online forum thread: bb.org.au/33cNdQU. It's a safe place where anyone can share how they're feeling about the coronavirus and offer support to those affected. You can also visit their dedicated information page about mental health and the coronavirus [here](#).

If you're feeling distressed or overwhelmed, Beyond Blue have mental health professionals available 24/7 at the Beyond Blue Support Service on 1300 22 4636 or at beyondblue.org.au/getsupport for online chat (3pm-12am AEST) and email (responses within 24 hours).

For immediate support call Lifeline on 13 11 14 and in an emergency, always call triple zero (000).