



By Lisa Hopkins
Chief executive
Business Events Industry
Aotearoa (BEIA)

Kia ora,

Another day, another lockdown. We should, by now, have a foolproof strategy to handle lockdowns, in terms of our business, people, family and well-being. Yet each time, it just feels harder and harder.

What makes this lockdown feel so difficult is the fear of Delta and what it has done internationally. We don't need to look too far, unfortunately, to see how the virus can take hold. Yet again, it would be easy to point a finger, and blame the Government, but frankly, our best approach is to work to find solutions with officials.

Yes, we should have had access to the vaccine much earlier. Yes, we could all see that at some stage, we would be dealing with the Delta variant and the country needed to be prepared. Any BEIA member could tell the Government that one of the golden rules of crisis management is prepare for every variable.

But none of this is going to bring back

IF YOU WANT TO ATTEND AN EVENT, DO YOU HAVE TO BE VACCINATED?

business lost, restore customer confidence, or get the doors open tomorrow for unrestricted events.

It seems that the main tool in the toolbox is to vaccinate, and that raises a multitude of new questions.

- Can only vaccinated people attend a conference?
- How will they show proof of vaccination?
- Can an event owner insist that all staff must be vaccinated?
- Is this an HR issue or a Health and Safety issue?
- Will all international visitors need to be vaccinated before they arrive?
- Will there be access to rapid testing kits?
- How important will air filtration systems be in venue preference?

At the moment, there is much speculation, but I will offer up a couple of other thoughts.

What will be the expectation of our international visitors attending conferences or travelling through the country on an incentive? If they have to be vaccinated to arrive in the country, then surely, everyone they come into contact with must be as well?

While I don't know where Government will finally land with this, I do know business associations, including BEIA, will contribute to the conversation in the hope that some sort of guidance will be developed sooner, rather than later.

The other hot topic is insurance. I have publicly thanked Stu Hartley at EventCover for his partnership and sheer determination in developing a solution which we have taken to the Government

on multiple occasions. At the time, we told the Government that there was no other insurance option available, anywhere, and we needed their support to purchase the premium for the sector.

Since then, the UK Government has launched its eye-watering £750m insurance scheme.

However, we continue to persevere and keep the conversation alive with officials to ensure that the continuity of our sector is not continuously disrupted every time there is an outbreak.

Finally, I want to pay tribute and thanks to Tony Gardner, chair of the BEIA Board who will be stepping down from this position at the next AGM. Under his leadership, CINZ/BEIA, and to paraphrase the great words of Dickens, has seen the best of times and the worst of times. 2019 was a bumper year. 2020 was like nothing any of us had experienced before.

I remember when I first met Tony, during the recruitment for the CE role, and our shared excitement about the possibilities for the industry in 2020. It was to be our year. Little did we know.

Tony is passionate about business events. He loves the people, the engagement, and the role BEIA holds in the sector. Thank you, Tony, for the six years of service as the chair. We have grown and developed under your leadership and will be forever appreciative of your support.

The announcement of the new chair will be made at the AGM.

*Nga mihi nui,
Lisa Hopkins*



BE Vaccinated

Let's lead the way and BE reconnected to the world #BEVaccinated #carryonmeeting

