



Coronavirus | Covid-19

TSO Response and Outlook

On Thursday 12 March, Coronavirus COVID-19 was elevated to pandemic status by the World Health Organisation and the TSO convened a **Coronavirus Response Leadership Team** to steer the organisation through the challenges ahead.

On the morning of Friday 13 March, TSO initiated plans to cancel concerts from Monday 16 March. Later that day, the cancellations were brought forward to Saturday 14 March following advice from the Prime Minister and Chief Medical Officer that mass gatherings of 500+ people would no longer be possible.

Phase 1 | Crisis Management

From Friday 13 March until Easter, the Coronavirus Response Leadership Team ensured the TSO's compliance with government directives and managed overall business continuity.

As a result, the TSO achieved the following in that four-week period:

- Kept apace of government mandated change
- Ensured TSO's cashflow and financial sustainability for 2020
- Registered for the Federal JobKeeper Stimulus
- Provided job security for TSO employees for the foreseeable future
- Enabled off-site working and access to all systems with cyber-risk mitigation processes in place
- Kept the TSO offices open and studio operational for skeleton staff and musicians with social distancing and sanitisation measures in place
- Maintained a presence in the lives of our audiences through the launch of TSO Daily Dose – a free dose of music, joy, inspiration and connection every morning
- Raised \$72K to support the creation of TSO Daily Dose
- Connected in new ways with donors and long-term subscribers

Phase 2 | Adapt and accelerate

Returning from the Easter Break, TSO entered an *adapt and accelerate* phase. The Coronavirus Response Leadership Team divided into a **Planning for Now** team lead by Jacqui Walkden, and a **Planning Ahead** team lead by Caroline Sharpen.

Together the teams are working to oversee adaptation to the new normal, planning, and accelerating viable initiatives so TSO is fast out of the blocks when operating conditions permit.

Since Monday 20 April, the **Planning for Now** team has:

- Achieved significant cost savings enabling us to forecast a break-even position in 2020 (net of government stimulus).

- Implemented the Federal JobKeeper Scheme which subsidises the wages of 88 full-time, part-time and casual employees (musicians and staff).
- Maintained a state-wide, national and international presence through TSO Daily Dose.
- Launched TSO TUNE IN at the commencement of School Term 2. TUNE IN is an online collection of 48 stand-alone pages of music, video and activities for students, families, school groups and life-long learners. It is a major addition to national resources available for home schooling.
- Launched TSO 20 Projects – a company-wide initiative bringing cross-disciplinary teams of musicians and staff together to work on projects that do one of four things:
 - i. Respond to an internal or external community need
 - ii. Generate income
 - iii. Improve the TSO leasehold
 - iv. Get things done that we don't normally have time to do

Meanwhile, the **Planning Ahead Team** has been working on a three-year recovery plan with an emphasis on building a flexible and adaptable TSO program in 2021.

Outlook

Despite the challenges Coronavirus has presented, TSO is fortunate to have strong ongoing partnerships with, and investment from, the Federal and State Governments. It is also fortunate to be eligible for the JobKeeper Stimulus Scheme which provides a genuine buffer in 2020. TSO has been well-governed and well-managed for more than 70 years, such that the orchestra has the resilience and reserves to ride out the impact of the disease.

Silver linings include the development of a new international subscriber base through our YouTube Channel (Daily Dose), as well as a national online learning audience via TUNE IN. We are also learning a lot and building new expertise within the TSO. An example is the experience and understanding we have gained in creating high quality experiences of orchestral and chamber music for digital distribution.

TSO's decision making is directly linked to government directives. The two material variables for TSO are i) mass gathering restrictions and ii) social distancing restrictions. These factors are overlaid with our assumptions about domestic and international travel, quarantine and health passports. The picture will become clearer with the passage of time, but there is no doubt that TSO will continue its presence in the lives of Tasmanian audiences in rich, stimulating and varied ways – this year, next year and beyond.

Decision-Making Values

Finally, for the information of members, decisions relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the TSO Response have been made through the lens of TSO Values. All decisions have referenced and been consistent with the following:

- a) The long-term health and viability of the TSO is the fundamental. As **stewards of the organisation**, we manage risk, capital, resourcing and reputation to safeguard the future of the organisation.
- b) TSO is the **sum of its people**. The health and well-being and extent to which we value all employees is paramount.
- c) Art is made in the presence of an audience. TSO exists **to serve its audiences** and the wider Tasmanian Community.
- d) All decisions are made and communicated with **integrity, transparency and kindness**.
- e) TSO is the largest performing arts organisation in Tasmania and the recipient of significant public investment. As industry leaders, we behave **ethically, and with a strong sense of social and civic responsibility**.