

18 June 2020

Ms Michelle Rak
Assistant Secretary
JobKeeper Division - Fiscal Group
The Treasury
Langton Crescent
PARKES ACT 2600

By email: michelle.rak@treasury.gov.au

CC: Coronavirus Business Liaison Unit, Treasury: CoronaVirusBusinessLiaison@treasury.gov.au

Dear Michelle,

Treasury Review of the JobKeeper Program - ongoing engagement with the NTLG

Thank you for attending the National Tax Liaison Group (**NTLG**) last Thursday morning (11 June 2020) and for your encouraging comments on the value of ongoing consultation with Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, Corporate Tax Association, CPA Australia, Institute of Public Accountants, Law Council of Australia and The Tax Institute (together **the Joint Bodies**) on Treasury's review (**the Review**) of the JobKeeper Program (**the Program**).

As acknowledged at last Thursday's meeting, the Joint Bodies greatly appreciated being actively involved in the initial rollout of the Program and would welcome the opportunity to engage with Treasury and the ATO on any proposed changes or tapering of the Program as a result of the Review. The Joint Bodies will treat any required engagement, whether it be structured consultation or stress testing proposed approaches, with the highest priority and will adhere to whatever level of confidentiality considered appropriate.

As discussed at the NTLG meeting on Thursday, aside from delivering much needed financial assistance to millions of Australians, the Program has engendered a heightened level of confidence in government and its ability to assist the community in a time of need. That confidence in government and its decisions will become even more important as employees and employers come to grips with the true impacts of COVID-19 over the coming months.

In a relatively short period of time, the tax profession has had the responsibility of firstly establishing a clear understanding of the Program and then disseminating this information to their clients in order to navigate access to the Program. Most of the heavy lifting regarding implementation was undertaken by tax professionals through the investment of a significant amount of time and effort. It would be greatly appreciated that this group has some involvement and input in any proposed changes to the Program.

On this point, the strong message being conveyed by our members is that piecemeal or scattergun approaches to changes to the Program will quickly erode community confidence and trust in the government's handling of what will be an economic crisis for many Australians. On this basis, with the exception of announced changes impacting the childcare industry, the Joint Bodies would strongly caution

against making any changes to the current Program prior to the scheduled September end date. We would also respectfully suggest that any proposed extensions or tapering of the Program which extend beyond 30 September 2020 be announced as part of a broader package of changes/enhancements of the Program on 23 July 2020.

We very much look forward to once again working alongside you and your colleagues on this next stage of the Program and reiterate our commitment to assisting Treasury in any way possible over the coming months.

Should you wish to contact us in relation to the above, please contact Tax Counsel, Stephanie Caredes, on 02 8223 0059 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Croker
Tax Leader Australia
Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand



Michelle de Niese
Executive Director
Corporate Tax Association



Dr Gary Pflugrath
Executive General Manager, Policy & Advocacy
CPA Australia



Tony Greco
General Manager Technical Policy
Institute of Public Accountants



Greg Rodgers
Chair – Business Law Section
Law Council of Australia



Peter Godber
President
The Tax Institute