

Natasha Exel

From: Eloise Emmett [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 26 August 2020 12:15 PM
To: Natasha Exel; Ivan Dean
Subject: Mismanaged Hardship grants

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Hello Natasha and Ivan

I am writing to express my disgust in the management of the Hardship Grants for businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic and I would like to know why my Business that was ordered to close for 10 weeks wasn't considered to be suffering any Hardship.

I operate an Event House with 4 luxury self-contained chalets on the Tasman Peninsula, where I also teach cooking workshops and cook for hosted weekends. I cannot comprehend why a business that was ordered to close for 10 weeks is not eligible for assistance with all the overheads the business still needs to pay? Living in a small community and being involved in several industries in Tasmania we hear who has and who hasn't received the assistance. There appears to be no fairness in the approval process with many less impacted businesses being successful in their applications. Businesses that were still allowed to operate over the lockdown received the assistance. The main reason my application was rejected was that I did not meet the hardship test because I did not have a downturn during January to March. Infact our turnover had increased from the year before, even though we had many cancellations and thousands of dollars in refunds given for cancelled bookings. The increase in turnover was due to hard work and adapting and improving the business with new activities. Anyone that operates a business in regional Tasmania understands that the high season trade is also the cash-flow for the winter or low season trade. But then following this we were almost completely CLOSED, not allowed to operate due to the restrictions on accommodation and travel, for 10 weeks, so the following few months were extremely down in trade and moving forward will be down, for who knows how long? It was upsetting to read that my business was deemed to be of no "economic growth and social benefit to the community" in the rejection letter. I am sure the many suppliers I purchase from such as local vineyards, honey producers, quail farmers, cheese makers and more would disagree!! I started my first restaurant on the Tasman Peninsula when I was 26 years old and it always had a great reputation, always bringing people to visit the area. I have spent nearly 20 years working in and promoting the area and the local produce. Through my business endeavours over the years, I have trained many staff, written cookbooks that have won international and national awards, helped start the Bream Creek Farmers Market, a healthy lunch program in the local school and cooking classes in pre-schools, amongst many other activities I have been involved in within the community.

Another point that they made was that my business does not employ anyone, while this is true it is still a job for myself and I still create employment in the area with the suppliers I use such as the vineyards, cheesemaker and farmers I support plus I hire contractors for laundry cleaning and gardening so my business creates employment by operating.

Thanks Eloise Emmett

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