

Roads to Recovery

Dear Stakeholder:

Determining the economic impact of this vast public-health crisis is one of the responsibilities of the Bermuda Tourism Authority. It's difficult work. Each statistic reflects adversely on someone's business, reveals hardship in someone's life.

Based on what we've measured so far, 97 percent of the country's hotel inventory is closed. That means 1,900 people are out of work in the hotel sector. We estimate 70 percent of that number is made up of Bermudians, based on workforce data recorded last year.



The BTA is grateful to hear of the government's swift action to introduce unemployment benefits for hospitality workers suddenly made jobless as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Tourism industry employees are a critical, irreplaceable part of the Bermuda visitor experience and we hope this financial assistance bridges a gap for them between now and the time a tourism recovery can safely commence.

We know the impact on jobs goes far beyond the hotel sector. Our partners in restaurants and retail are similarly burdened during this crisis. Tour operators, experience providers and transport businesses feel this pain, too. This week our Business Intelligence team is working to calculate the scope of what's happening in these areas [via a survey](#) on which we're grateful to have the collaboration of fellow agencies in our community: Bermuda Chamber of Commerce, Bermuda Economic Development Corporation, and Bermuda Employers Council. Together, we'll analyse what's happening, advise the government about what we see and guide stakeholders to the support they need.

To that end, our [BTA COVID-19 resources website platform](#) launched this week includes promotional listings and links for advice to help support business owners through the crisis. We're also putting together a stakeholder webinar for April 2, with experts who can offer suggestions and answer questions—on everything from innovating your business to finding financial resources. Another [webinar scheduled for March 31](#) will share tips on navigating social-media marketing in this new normal.

In the meantime, we're pivoting our Bermuda social channels to back local businesses innovating to remain viable. So far, 150 businesses are listed on the new COVID-19 webpage and the response on social media has been even stronger than we expected.

These are the green shoots in Bermuda's tourism industry right now. We are inspired by them and are redoubling our efforts to ensure they get the sunlight they deserve.

Sincerely,

Glenn Jones
Interim CEO & Chief Experience Development Officer