The following is a digest of TIAO updates as well as questions asked during the industry calls hosted by TIAO. We’ve done our best to provide the answers you need, provide links where we can, and are committed to taking your concerns forward in our discussions with government officials.

Updates from TIAO:

- Thank you to everyone that participated in survey eight. We are working with Navigator who is analyzing the survey. We should have highlights from that next week. They are also working with us on our government relations strategy and we are having as many conversations with as many different people about the economic stimulus package and the financial support that our industry needs.

- Last week was our Virtual Queen’s Park Day. We met with 30 MPs from all 4 parties. It was great to see some new faces from the membership. We took forward a proposal for economic recovery which is ahead of the November budget. Our key messages were:
  1) An economic stimulus package that helps to keep tourism businesses solvent over a twelve to eighteen-month period through a program of forgivable grants and loans.
  2) A capital expenditure program or tax credit to help cover costs of PPE and implementing health and safety protocols including physical distancing.
  3) Reduce or eliminate permits and licensing costs and red tape to help alleviate unnecessary financial and regulatory burdens on businesses.
  4) A tax-based incentive for Ontarians to rediscover our province and support local.
  5) Targeted financial support for attractions and tourism businesses that have been unable to open or fully open in Stage 3.

We had some good conversations and have been asked to put some actual numbers to the different recommendations. We are working closely with MHSTC to ensure we are aligned.

- If you have specific examples around permit licensing costs and red tape within your business that you would like to see corrected or removed, please give us details. We would be happy to take that into consideration.

We are currently combing through the advisory panel reports where there is a section on regulatory reduction and red tape removal.

- We are also working at the federal level with TIAC on similar asks. We are refining an ask around a federal travel tax credit for Canadians who would travel within Canada in 2021.
• We joined a coalition that TIAC, the Hotel Association of Canada, FAME (Festivals and Major Events Canada), and the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada started. The coalition is called Hardest Hit: https://www.hardesthit.ca/
It is a coalition of tourism organizations across the country that are petitioning Minister Freeland with the key message around extending the wage subsidy to spring or summer of 2021. So we need everyone to send the letter to Minister Freeland and your MP. All you have to do is put your address, your name and your email address and it will pre populate a letter. We can hopefully get some action on this particular matter.
• Reminder that the Safe Travels Stamp application is now open. It might seem strange to be doing this when government has reduced gatherings, but those reductions in gatherings are not specific to businesses. As people continue to explore the province we want to make sure that they know that our industry is operating with their health and safety in mind - https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/safetravelsstamp
There is no cost to participate.
• The Ontario Tourism Summit is open for ticket sales - $100 for up to five people from an individual business or $250 for five people from an organization. https://www.tiaontario.ca/events/test-ots
You have the option to purchase a meal with your gala ticket ($75/pp). The gala ticket is included in the registration, but you get the opportunity to purchase a meal ticket which is supporting a local restaurant wherever you’re watching the gala broadcast from. The ticket includes an appetizer, entrée, and your choice of dessert, wine, beer or cider (from an Ontario producer). We will share information on these restaurants on our social media channels. Some organizations will also have watch parties for the awards gala.
• We have two opportunities coming up. There is a fall budget coming in November, no specific date as of yet. All of our conversations are focused on that right now. Once we know what’s in that budget we’ll be able to start to really focusing on what’s happening. Also a spring budget has been confirmed to us. It will be a long budget process. There will be lots of opportunity for us to engage with Queen’s Park on the fact that the tourism industry needs the support.

Northern Ontario

Number of participants: 25

Update from NOTO:

• Thank you to TIAO for tourism day at Queen’s Park. We had some very successful meetings with some Northern MPPs that we’re now following up with. There is strong support for tourism in Northern Ontario.
• We had the opportunity last Friday to attend one of Minister Phillip’s budget consultations, which was face to face in Sudbury. It was a very small group of people (six) which gave us ample opportunity to bring some of the recommendations for next year’s budget in order to help the tourism industry recover from COVID-19.
We are echoing everything that TIAO was saying; it falls right in line with everything that we’ve heard from the industry up here. Those five asks are crucial to us moving forward.

Comment from TIAO

• It is a team effort and we are starting from a non-economic standpoint to have conversations with the government about how we are prepared to open up other segments of the industry; looking at the snow resorts and trying to understand how ski resorts would be able to operate in this environment. Obviously with the number of cases
going up over the last week, the focus has shifted. So we are staying with our messaging around financial assistance.

Questions:

1) With the increase in cases, any talk of a second lockdown or regional travel restrictions?

The Premier has reduced the gathering sizes for the entire province. We will have to sit tight to see whether or not the cases get to the point where the number of hospitalizations are going up. One of the big factors is if the medical system handle the increase in cases.

We need the schools to be back up and running for a couple more weeks for us to really understand if we’re going to see a more stringent approach,

The only change is reduction in gathering sizes for private events. For businesses, those restrictions are not in place.

Comments:

Great idea for the dinners!

Open Call (Sector Associations, Tourism Operators, Educators and DMOs)

Number of participants: 71

Questions:

1) A) Hoping for clarification on meetings and conferences? Is it 30% or 10ppl?

For meetings and conferences indoors, you can have 50 people in a room. You can have multiple rooms of 50 but you cannot have any cross contamination.

The reduction for indoor gatherings to 10 people applies to private gatherings and not to ones that are associated with businesses. The people in meeting rooms cannot connect with other people, meaning no breaks at the same time. Also you can’t have the same staff serving the two meeting works.

B) As well as no mingling, food and beverage consumed sitting down correct?

This is correct.

2) Presently, are there limits to occupancy allowed in hotels in Ontario? Where might I find them?

There are recommendations from the accommodations sector. We encourage you to look at the Safe Stay protocols and also check in with your local public health unit.
Most accommodators are operating at about 85% capacity, leaving rooms overnight or longer in between guest stays to ensure effective cleaning takes place.

Comment:

- SEO is working on translation of the key information from the Safe Travels program as well as webinars to support businesses with francophone/bilingual DMOs.

RESOURCES:

- Ontario’s Stage 3 reopening: https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#section-3
- Industry Protocols and Guidelines: https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/covid19
- Free online Training to Promote Safe Workplaces: https://www.ontario.ca/page/training-joint-health-and-safety-committee-members
- Northern Ontario Business reopening Toolkit: http://reopenthенorth.ca
- Safe Travels Stamp Application: https://www.tiaontario.ca/cpages/safetravelsstamp

We look forward to speaking with you again soon!