



AUSTRALIAN
FUNERAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION

Australian Funeral Directors
Association Limited
Level 1, 700 High Street
(PO Box 291)
KEW EAST VIC 3102

17 August 2021

Mr Geoff Provest MP
103 Minjungbal Drive
TWEED HEADS SOUTH NSW 2486
tweed@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Provest

We write to you to express our concerns regarding the new border restrictions between Queensland and New South Wales and the negative impact on funeral directors and families who have lost a loved one at what is already a difficult time.

The Australian Funeral Directors Association (AFDA) was formed in 1935 and represents most funeral directors in Australia - 142 members with more than 632 premises across the country. These businesses, 90% of which are small and family-owned, manage 65% of the approximately 160,000 funerals conducted in Australia annually.

Funeral Directors need to cross the border to collect the deceased or to conduct a funeral. Southern Gold Coast and Tweed Families rely on local funeral homes and crematoria to be able to offer death care even through a pandemic. Both tasks can be completed within a short period of time and would be provided with a letter on their employer's letterhead, a roster or a booked appointment that shows that they need to be physically present to perform essential work.

If you are a New South Wales border zone resident you can only enter Queensland for essential work. Similarly, if you are a Queensland resident you can only enter the border zone for essential work (you must follow stay at home requirements when you return to Queensland).

QLD Health has deemed that essential work includes work that is urgently required for:

- for safety reasons
- for emergency repairs
- that is necessary to maintain essential services and supplies to the community, or part of the community.

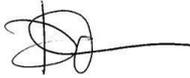
We request an immediate review of the current restrictions to enable:

- Border funeral directors and mortuary workers to be classified as essential workers to be able to take bodies across the Queensland-NSW border, as a minimum. In reality, all funeral directors should be considered essential workers.
- Funeral Directors to be declared essential workers to give staff who need access over the border and into hospitals and nursing care homes the ability to receive priority vaccination.

- Consistent messaging at the border from police and border staff.

AFDA requests that the Queensland Government urgently acts to recognise funeral directors as essential workers so they can continue to cross the Queensland – NSW border and do their jobs in the interests of the families of those who have lost a loved one during this very difficult time.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dale Gilson
Chief Executive Officer