

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: QLD GOVERNMENT SAFE NIGHT OUT STRATEGY – BILL
AMENDMENT

This is a submission from the collective of traders and licensees of the Caxton Street Precinct Liquor Accord in a response to the recent bill amendment, regarding the Government's 'Safe Night Out Strategy.'

We, as a collective of traders believe the 'one size fits all' approach to your Safe Drink Area (SDA) regulations would be hugely detrimental to our Precinct's business viability.

As was stated in previous submissions, regarding this regulation, "Caxton Street is unique to any other precinct in the State, due to its location regarding Suncorp Stadium and operates in a very different manner to any other entertainment precinct," yet we have been lumped with a 'Valley-style solution' to problems that do not even exist in our area. We would like to point to our very good and consistent reports from QPS and QOLGR.

From Sunday through to Thursday the Caxton Street Precinct is predominantly a dining precinct, with almost every venue offering food; half the venues are actually closed Monday and Tuesdays; yet venues in our proposed SDA, which are licensed to trade post-midnight, are supposed to ID scan all patrons from 8pm, 7 days a week? This seems to be an unnecessary overkill. For instance, customers dining at The Caxton Hotel for a steak on a Monday, 2-4-1 meals at Casablanacas on Tuesday, or a pizza at Brewski on Wednesday, at 8.30pm need to be ID scanned to eat a meal. I can't think of any restaurant where this condition applies. Families and Diners are not the target of the Safe Night Out Strategy. Dining customers aside, many older customers do not even carry ID. Are they to be turned away at the doors of venues on Caxton Street because they cannot be scanned? Is this not discriminatory and just plain wrong?

To continue, why has 8pm become the proposed starting time for ID scanning customers on a nightly basis in an SDA? The current law obliges venues choosing to trade past midnight to employ security services from 11pm - certainly a time more reflective of the late night economy.

What you are proposing makes it financially unfeasible for ANY licensed venue in Caxton Street to trade past midnight Sunday to Thursday. For example, Lefty's trades until 3am Wednesday to Sunday; they will hence be paying an extra 6 hours of security wages per night including the 'licensed ID scanner operator'. The Caxton Hotel pays approximately \$200,000 per year in security wages; with the implementation of your current bill amendment and SDA, a conservative valuation of security wages of \$1,000,000 per year has been estimated. These are but two examples of what EVERY operator in the precinct is up against. We don't believe the intent of the bill is to make business uneconomic & conditions so onerous as to be impractical.

You are planning a bright, bubbly, friendly precinct but you will kill the businesses that make it what it is. Your regulations will simply force almost all venues in the area to close early or to close, period. It is certainly not the direction we envisioned a forward-thinking, red tape-reducing Liberal State Government would take.

This is not to mention the supposed boundaries of the proposed SDA of the Caxton Street Precinct. Will it include The Normanby Hotel, The Paddington Tavern, Iceworks and the numerous post-midnight traders in The Caxton Barracks? If not, the mere idea of creating a 'Safe Drink Area' around Suncorp Stadium, by omitting multiple late licensed venues (one being deemed high-risk by QOLGR) is grossly anti-competitive and makes the creation of a Safe Drink Area in Caxton Street somewhat redundant.

The 'Safe Night Out Strategy' has the potential to be a ground breaking policy, setting a precedent that other State Governments will hope to emulate; if not other Governments around the globe. However, to 'get it right,' we implore you to re-evaluate your implementation of these new regulations, especially treating your proposed SDAs on a case-by-case basis.

The Caxton Street Precinct has maintained a high level of patron safety and amenity, with low overall records of incidents and has functioned very efficiently, regarding Suncorp Stadium event days, over the past decade. We have an active liquor accord, which has been operating for over five years. Veteran and newer traders united, Caxton Street Precinct is destined for an extremely positive and bright future, which has the potential to be cut horribly short with the implementation of the bill amendment as it currently stands.

Best Regards,

Alexander Farquhar

Chairman

Caxton Street Precinct Liquor Accord

