



Principal Research Officer  
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee  
Parliament House, QLD. 4000

**Re: Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill**

The Live Music Office was established in July 2013, and works to increase opportunities for live music in Australia by identifying and advocating for better policy, regulation and strategy.

The introduction of the Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill into the QLD Parliament on 12 November 2015 has the objective of reducing alcohol fuelled violence, and whilst this intent should be universally supported, there are genuine concerns from the live music and entertainment sector about industry impacts from the particular method being proposed in the legislation.

On Thursday 17 December the Live Music Office met with Mr Mark Furner, Ms Joan Pease and Mr Tony Perrett from the Queensland Parliament's Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in Sydney as they investigated the experience in NSW of the introduction of the CBD plan of management where the following issues were raised in detail.

It has been noted that precedents from Kings Cross and the Sydney CBD have informed the development of the Queensland legislation. For the live music sector, the outcome from the City of Sydney CBD Plan of Management, Liquor Freeze and Risk Based Licensing interventions in NSW has seen a significant drop in live music jobs and opportunities. Not only this, but venue owners tell us that there has been reduced programming, less risky programming, and most worryingly and irrespective of what the data says, a significant reduction in industry confidence.

Very recent years have seen a number of measures including I.D. scanners and safe night precincts introduced to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence in Queensland. Serious consideration should be given to continuing to work with these measures as well as visible policing, and evaluate their effectiveness first, before introducing a statewide 2am cease trade.

In this context I note a media release from the NSW Government on Monday 30 December, 2013 - "[NSW GOVERNMENT'S ALCOHOL CRACKDOWN WORKING](#)" that identified significant downward trends in alcohol related violence that were greater state wide than those achieved in Newcastle with lockouts, with the following quote from the Minister George Souris - "*This challenges the claim that Newcastle style restrictions are the only pathway to achieving real reductions in alcohol-related violence*".

A further consideration should be that whilst there have been serious issues in NSW in Kings Cross and the Sydney CBD – introducing wide ranging winding back of trading conditions in Queensland from issues experienced from finite capital city entertainment areas and interstate incidents may not be an evidence based position to be making state-wide policy.

The impacts from the Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill are likely to be felt further afield than just the live music industry as reputational impacts are felt across the tourism, hospitality and primary industries sector. It will be costly. It would be of interest to see what if any research has been undertaken into tourism demographics such as country of origin, age, potential to find employment in Queensland and contribute to the



economy in this context, as well as into the potential losses to accommodation, transport, tourism and hospitality industry businesses as reputational impacts are felt across the state. Research undertaken with the Live Music Office in 2014 by the University of Tasmania, [The Economic and Cultural Value of Live Music in Australia 2014](#), identified that for every dollar spent on live music, three dollars are returned to the community. A breakdown of consumer spend on live music identifies that approx 20% is spent on tickets, food and drink 30%, transport and accommodation 30%, and communications, merchandise etc makes up the final 20%. The associated loss of jobs in the live music sector will have an impact on the broader Queensland economy.

The experience of NSW has been that the sudden introduction of these strong measures has seen businesses poorly placed to adjust their operation, and there are a number of measures that should be taken to ensure any potential impact on the live music and performance sector are minimized if the legislation is progressed.

Some of these should be adopted even if the legislation is not supported either by being recognized from the committee process as having serious unintended consequences to the state of Queensland where ID scanners, Safer Night Precincts and visible policing can deliver good results, or if the Bill is defeated in the Parliament.

### Recommendations

1. If the Bill is progressed, deliberation should be given to allow venues to trade up until 3am rather than introducing a blanket 2am cease trade across the state.
2. If a 1am lockout is to be introduced, either in Safer Night Precincts or otherwise, that exemptions are given to live music venues to allow patrons and artists to visit venues after that time up until the cease trade to ensure that live music is sustainable across the state. Consideration could be given to the size of the venue and associated low risk, as has been done in Victoria with the [exemptions for 200 capacity live music venues from the 1am liquor freeze in Melbourne](#). The City of Sydney have also committed to advocating for exemptions from the freeze and the lockouts, subject to evidence that live music venues are not part of the problem or actively work against a culture of alcohol abuse and anti social behavior
3. Introduce a reference in the legislation objectives to the live music and entertainment sector. This would follow precedents in NSW, SA, WA and VIC that recognize the important role liquor regulation plays in the responsible development of the live music industry. An amendment to the Bill with reference to the live music industry would also support new licenses, or variations and transfers of existing licenses to support live music venues as well as policy responses within the harm minimisation direction of the Bill.
4. Establishment of a regulation roundtable to coordinate government agencies and the live music and arts and cultural sector, to develop better policy and regulation for live music and performance in Queensland. Live music venues exist within a co-regulatory environment – where liquor, planning and environmental protection regulations all guide the operation of the premises. It has been identified by the Live Music Office through extensive consultation throughout the state that the greatest issue faced by the live music sector in Queensland is the operation of the noise restrictions policy from the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation. Along with the



proposed liquor legislation, these pose a significant threat to future investment in hospitality and entertainment venues in Queensland. Following on from precedents in VIC, SA and soon to be WA, the establishment of a regulation roundtable would convene regulatory agencies with police, local government, and the live music and hospitality sector to ensure the ongoing operation of these regulations do not adversely impact the live music sector, as well as achieve associated benefits such as better relationships, communication, and capacity from working together across agencies.

- Work together to optimise regulatory processes
- Work together to streamline administrative processes
- Investigate a prospective live music and performance plans informed by methodologies used interstate
- Examine work in building policy underway in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales in developing regulation to encourage low risk arts and cultural venues, pop ups and the adaptive reuse of buildings for QLD application

We thank the Queensland Parliament's Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for the opportunity to consult on the legislation, and commend the four recommendations to the Parliament.

If I can be of any further assistance please let me know,

Yours Sincerely,

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