

# Music Festival Roundtable

## 8 June 2022



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## Outcomes and Next Steps

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The Music Festival Roundtable provides government agencies, lawmakers, regulators and industry stakeholders the opportunity to strengthen relationships, share information, address members' priorities and tackle emerging issues impacting music festivals in NSW.

It is established by the Minister for Customer Service under the Music Festivals Act 2019, with its functions specified in the Act and which include supporting the growth of the music festival industry in NSW and the safety of patrons. Membership of the Roundtable is also outlined in the Act and comprises equal distribution of government and industry representatives.

Joint statements about key meeting topics and outcomes are published below.

### Music Festival Roundtable — 8 June 2022

- The ninth Music Festival Roundtable was held on 8 June 2022. The government co-chair was Anthony Keon, Chief Executive Officer, Hospitality and Racing, Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade (DEIT) and the industry co-chair was Julia Robinson, General Manager of the Australian Festival Association (AFA). Julia Robinson chaired the meeting.
- Julia Robinson highlighted current industry challenges which included the increase in operational costs by 30-40% and raised the ongoing concern regarding the critical skills shortage particularly in the security and hospitality areas. COVID-19 amongst the artists also poses challenges resulting in cancellations of tours or having to change tours last minute which will likely be an ongoing issue.
- Julia Robinson presented a case study on *Good Life*, one of a few under-18 events still in operation in NSW. Good Life organisers are reconsidering their presence in the market due to increased running costs related to user charges for operations and policing. Lack of professional organisers in this space can lead to a risk of unregulated events.
- Members discussed other recent examples where costs had increased, and in some cases tripled, and also issues finding harm-minimisation service providers where there were multiple events in an area on the same day. Daniel Maddedu from NSW Health advised they have a priority for music festivals, and in the coming year NSW Health will go to tender for providers for a range of services.
- Anthony Keon from Hospitality and Racing discussed the issue of skills and staffing shortage. Industry is finding it difficult to attract staff with experience or training. He noted the availability of fee free RSA refresher training. In addition, an Industry Roundtable was scheduled for 30 June 2022 to discuss such issues and what Government can do to assist.

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- Natasha Luschwitz from Department of Premier and Cabinet advised that the requirement to be fully vaccinated at indoor music festivals was lifted today.
- Anthony Keon advised Liquor, Gaming and Racing functions came across from Department of Customer Service to Hospitality and Racing under the new DEIT) on 1 April 2022. DEIT functions include:
  - Enterprise, Investment and Trade
  - Science, Innovation and Technology
  - Hospitality and Racing
  - Culture and Tourism
  - Sport
  - Western Parkland Authority
- Anthony Vessio from L&GNSW Licensing spoke about the *One from the Heart Concert* – Council effort to invigorate Lismore following the floods. L&GNSW facilitated a swift turnaround of licensing requirements for the organiser, tying in with NSW Government's mandate to support flood affected areas where possible.
- The Music Festival Resources Hub went live on 14 April 2022, which includes the early notification form and other resources such as funding support available to organisers of events. Up to 30 May, 160 unique visits were made to the site with 19 early notifications forms received. Of the 19 notifications, 3 were subject festivals looking for a short submission period and 10 are for new events or events not at a scale normally captured by the Music Festivals Act.
- Daniel Maddedu confirmed a remake of the public health order relating to festivals had come into effect. There was no requirement for masks at large indoor festivals, and the requirement to check in at certain premises has been removed. NSW Health is also closely monitoring Monkey Pox however public health risk is low.
- James Wilson from NSW Health reported that since recommencement of music festivals following stay-at-home orders, 10 subject festivals were held in NSW of which 2 experienced critical drug related presentations requiring airway management and medical retrieval. MDMA has been primary substance present. James noted there is increase in patronage now and a genuine commitment by organisers to minimise harm and ensure patron safety. NSW Health is keeping watch on increase in mental health presentations.
- Simon Glasser from NSW Police confirmed user charges are on the rise since COVID, to increase 6.9% from 1 July 2022. Police also agreed to provide updates following festivals to understand drug detection rates, trends in drug use and festival improvements around drug tests versus the number of people charged.

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- Rebecca Dean from Create NSW also noted the skills deficit around the technical sector and all forms of production.
- Luke Hanley from Destination NSW acknowledged the Mundi Mundi Bash contribution to accessibility and inclusion in returning to Broken Hill. Luke advised that the Regional Events Accelerator Fund (REAF) supports new initiatives in regions, and funding streams are available.
- Julia Robinson suggested a sub-committee scenario, once or twice a year, to discuss a risk assessment process before an event, to identify what mitigation can be put into place. Julia suggested the Secretariat could call for the top 5 statistics or points from the last quarter to assist in understanding trends. Luke Hanley suggested members could do a case study about their industry and share learnings.
- Susan Wright, Liquor & Gaming NSW addressed the Terms of Reference (ToR) and the administrative changes suggested below which were endorsed by the Roundtable members:
  - the current ToR provides two (2) members from NSW Health be represented at the Roundtable. Daniel Maddedu confirmed that 1 member from NSW Health is sufficient. A subject matter expert could be invited to speak on a particular matter instead, as required.
  - using Dr Chant as an example where it was difficult to nominate a proxy of equal rank, it was proposed if a member nominates a proxy, it needs to be executive director level, rather than equal seniority.
- Julia and Anthony raised the issue that the 70% quorum currently required at Roundtable meetings was too high. The following change was suggested and endorsed by the Roundtable members:

Meeting type	Quorum	Mandatory attendees
Normal meeting (i.e. not held at a music festival)	60 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liquor &amp; Gaming NSW</li><li>• NSW Police</li><li>• NSW Health</li><li>• AFA</li></ul>
Meeting held at music festival	40%	

### Next Steps

- The next Roundtable meeting will be hosted by industry at an event, as required by the *Music Festivals Act 2019*. The meeting will be held on 22 July 2022 at *Splendour in the Grass* in Byron Bay.

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### Attendee List

Roundtable Members	Organisation
Anthony Keon	Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade
Natasha Luschwitz	Department of Premier and Cabinet
Daniel Madeddu	Ministry of Health
Stuart Smith	NSW Police
David Dutton	NSW Ambulance
Rahat Kaul	Transport for NSW
Luke Hanley	Destination NSW
Julia Robinson	Australian Festival Association
Adelle Robinson	Australian Festival Association
Tara Benney	Australian Festival Association
Emily Collins	Music NSW
Evelyn Richardson	Live Performance Australia
Penelope Pedersen	Local Government NSW
Meeting Guests and Observers	Organisation
James Wilson	NSW Health
Paul Davies	MEAA
Simon Pogoriutchnig	NSW Rural Fire Service
Christopher Ryder	NSW Rural Fire Service
Nicola Taylor	Liquor & Gaming NSW
Gabbie Gallagher	Liquor & Gaming NSW
Aman Pablo	Liquor & Gaming NSW
Anthony Vescio	Liquor & Gaming NSW
Susan Wright	Liquor & Gaming NSW