

Fact sheet 1 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INDEPENDENT LIQUOR LAW REVIEW

Overview of NSW Government reforms to liquor laws

The NSW Government's response to the Independent Liquor Law Review has been announced, with a range of reforms to NSW liquor laws.

What is being announced?

The Government is announcing a package of new measures to create safe, diverse and vibrant night-time entertainment options for Sydney and NSW.

The package includes the Government's response to the Independent Liquor Law Review by the Hon Ian Callinan AC QC ('the Callinan review'), as well as other measures to improve the way licensed venues are regulated.

What did the Callinan review examine?

In early 2016, the Government appointed Mr Callinan to review liquor laws including:

- ▲ 1.30am lockouts and 3am last drinks in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross
- ▲ 10pm statewide restriction on takeaway alcohol sales
- ▲ The annual liquor licence fee system

The review included more than 1,800 submissions and almost 30 stakeholder sessions, including three roundtables into Sydney's night-time economy.

After receiving Mr Callinan's report on 13 September 2016, the Government immediately released it to give the public and all interested stakeholders a chance to consider its findings.

Liquor & Gaming NSW also held a series of community drop-in sessions to help people better understand the review's findings.

What did the Callinan review find?

The review found the lockout laws have successfully reduced alcohol-related violence and improved amenity and safety in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross.

It also found employment, live entertainment and vibrancy had been impacted.

To address these impacts, Mr Callinan suggested relaxing the laws with later lockout and last drinks times for lower-risk live entertainment venues.

He also suggested extending the 10pm statewide restriction on takeaway alcohol sales to 11pm.

What is the Government's response to the Callinan review?

After carefully considering the Callinan review's findings and consulting further with stakeholders, the Government will trial an extension of later lockout and last drinks times for genuine live entertainment venues in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross.

For these venues, lockouts will be extended from 1.30am to 2am, with last drinks moving from 3am to 3.30am.

The Government will also extend takeaway alcohol trading from 10pm to 11pm across the state.

What other measures are being announced?

The Government has considered a range of other measures to improve the way licensed venues are regulated and ensure people can enjoy safe nights out with a greater choice of entertainment options. The Government will also:

- ▲ Extend the liquor licence freeze in the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross until 1 June 2018, with some minor changes to help businesses improve their offerings to customers.
- ▲ Encourage greater diversity through small bars by increasing the small bar patron capacity from 60 to 100 and providing automatic extended trading to 2am for small bars in the CBD and Kings Cross.
- ▲ Retain mandatory ID scanners in Kings Cross
- ▲ Keep existing safeguards in CBD and Kings Cross precincts including drink and glass restrictions after midnight.
- ▲ Make changes to improve the effectiveness of the Three Strikes disciplinary scheme for venues that repeatedly commit the most serious offences under the Liquor Act, and the Minors Sanctions Scheme for venues that sell alcohol to under-18s.
- ▲ Introduce a provisional approval system for low-risk venues such as restaurants and cafés so they can begin liquor trading as soon as they lodge an application.

Further information about key reforms to the NSW liquor laws can be found in the other related fact sheets detailed below:

- 2 – Lockout laws in Sydney CBD and Kings Cross
- 3 – Extension of takeaway alcohol sales
- 4 – Small bar liquor licence changes
- 5 – Further changes to NSW liquor laws

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