



MEDIA RELEASE

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OKTOBERFEST ORGANISER FINED OVER \$26,000* FOR LIQUOR LAW OFFENCES

The organiser of Oktoberfest in the Gardens 2015 has been fined \$26,100* (*see below for update*) for allowing intoxicated patrons and serious breaches of licence conditions.

Ross Drennan pleaded guilty to 11 offences relating to the licensed event that attracted 12,000 patrons at the Domain in October 2015.

Mr Drennan was sentenced in the Downing Centre Local Court on 6 February following an investigation by Liquor & Gaming NSW.

NSW Police and Liquor & Gaming NSW inspectors who attended the event found intoxicated patrons who were unable to stand unaided, spilling drinks and slurring their speech.

One intoxicated patron was found clinging to a wheelie bin having urinated in his pants, while another assaulted a police officer after throwing an alcohol-drenched German hat at the officer. Other breaches included failing to properly maintain the incident register, not deploying identifiable RSA marshals and failing to provide adequate security of perimeter fences where patrons were seen urinating and lying down appearing to fall asleep

Liquor & Gaming NSW's Director of Compliance Operations, Sean Goodchild, said the case highlights what can go wrong when large events are not properly run.

"With very large crowds in confined spaces, these events can jeopardise public safety if organisers are not committed to the responsible service of alcohol," he said. "Festivals play a key role in providing more diverse entertainment and cultural options and showcasing artistic talent. "Most large festivals are well run but this case shows that organisers who fail to observe our state's liquor laws can expect to face prosecution and significant penalties in court."

**UPDATE: Mr Drennan appealed the decision of the Local Court magistrate to the NSW District Court on the grounds of severity. On 20 July 2017, a District Court Judge dismissed the convictions and fines under Section 10(1)(a) of the NSW Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act. This means that while the offences were proven, no conviction was recorded.*

MEDIA INQUIRIES: Eric Aubert (02) 9995 0794, 0438 207 294