


Newcastle NSW 2300

7 February 2018

Mr Jonathan Horton QC
The NSW Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority

Dear Sir

Re: THE NEWCASTLE CBD LIQUOR LICENCE REVIEW

We are residents of the suburb of Newcastle and are also medical specialists who work in the public health system, one of us covering trauma management. We hereby present our submission that the above review consider maintaining or even tightening the current “Newcastle conditions”.

Alcohol-related violence in all parts of Australia is a major public health issue and in the Hunter New England region the incidence has been above the NSW average ¹.

Since the restrictions in alcohol trading were imposed in Newcastle, there have been significant decreases in alcohol-related assaults in Newcastle (up to 79 % decrease in one study from Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research²) despite an increase in the number of licensed restaurants and bars opening within the Central Business District. Local residents like ourselves are now more willing to patronise these businesses in the CBD in the evenings as the city feels safer and more family-friendly.

Some critics of the current Newcastle conditions claim that restrictions should be loosened because the city has changed. The city **has** changed and it has changed for the better, primarily because of the alcohol restrictions, as all available objective evidence suggests. We believe that the city would revert to the inhospitable and dangerous place it used to be if these restrictions were lifted.

We would also like to note that the Newcastle City Council does not speak for us and has not brought this issue forward for wider debate.

We ask that your review considers the evidence showing significant advantages to the community in retaining the restrictions to alcohol availability and licensing conditions known as the Newcastle Conditions.

Yours faithfully

Signed by
Dr Stanley Chen and Dr Judith Kermode

References

1. <http://www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au/>
2. NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. (2017). NSW Recorded Crime Statistics Oct 2000 to Sep 2017: Number of non-domestic violence related assaults recorded by the NSW Police Force in Newcastle and Newcastle West as occurring on Friday and Saturday nights, 10pm to 6am. Reference: jh17-15776