

Department
of Industry

Newcastle Review <newcastle.review@ilga.nsw.gov.au>

Submission on the Newcastle CBD liquor licence conditions review

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To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to make a submission to the review on Newcastle CBD liquor licence conditions. There are many arguments in favour of the lockout laws and they did achieve immediate gains in decreasing the levels of violence in Newcastle CBD and in Kings Cross. However, ongoing longitudinal research from BOCSAR is demonstrating that definitive statements on the cause of declines and benefits of the lockouts are questionable. The evidence suggests that some of the broader impacts on surrounding areas outside of the lockout areas may indeed indicate that the benefits are overstated. Moreover, the impacts on the night-time economy in a major capital city like Sydney and in major regional centres such as Newcastle has been devastating.

It is time that the lockout laws are downgraded and revised. They should be acknowledged as a useful immediate response to a serious issue but not a long-term one. Many of local businesses and councils are working together now to come up with more healthy and sustainable ways of addressing the issue of managing a city centre night-time economy. These should be allowed to progress unhampered by unnecessary and out-dated prescriptions from 9 years ago. For example, **Newcastle City Council** has drafted an After Dark Strategy for managing a safe and vibrant night time economy in the city. It's Newcastle's first specific strategy for guiding the development of our night time economy and includes a range of beneficial options such as: late night cafes and bookshops to provide entertainment options without alcohol, microbars and small bars, and incentives for late night food cultures to develop and grow as in European cities.

It is time to take a more mature and long-term approach to managing a night-time economy and remove the lockout laws.

Kind regards,

Louise Askew
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