

Chairperson
Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority
Liquor & Gaming NSW
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Sydney NSW 2001
newcastle.review@ilga.nsw.gov.au

Review of liquor license conditions for 14 Newcastle CBD venues and other matters

Dear Mr Crawford

Please find following my submission to the above review.

We strongly support the retention of the current package of license conditions commonly referred to as the s104 Newcastle Conditions. We believe that any review of the same conditions should be conducted by ILGA in an open and transparent manner under the same legal provisions (conference) by which they originated.

We also support Superintendent John Gralton's strong public appeal for the preservation of the integrity of the package of conditions and agree to his proposal to strengthen the 'last drinks' provisions[1] given the available scientific evidence.

As a resident of Newcastle CBD for more than 15 years, we are aware of the horrific alcohol related violent incidents that occurred prior to the modest reduction in alcohol trading hours across these venues in March 2008. We now feel safe walking in the evening, to and from restaurants and the thriving small bars, that have popped up since the clean up of the laws. As a Nurse at the local public teaching Hospital, the difference in the trauma presentations, as well as the "morning after" arrivals to ED, was almost immediate, when the lock out laws were first brought in. PLEASE. We do not want to go back to the bad old days, when the Pubs and Clubs allowed a culture of 'get as pissed as possible because we make an easier profit'. It's traumatic, costly and frightening. We spent New Years Eve in Japan a few years ago. Japanese love their drinking but we were struck by the missing element of public urination smells, broken glass, late night fights and uncomfortable night time street atmosphere. That's when we realised how far from world's best practice the Liquor/AHA cultural dominance actually is in Newcastle and NSW. It just doesn't happen anywhere else.

We are also very concerned that the reported rate of non-domestic assaults in our CBD whilst still falling, is still around 9 times the NSW average rate. The level of reported domestic violence in Newcastle is also almost twice the NSW average rate. This also is unacceptable and many of these incidents are alcohol related. This acceptance of alcohol related behavior needs support, to continue to change for the better. The backward step of relaxing to those old law's would be appalling.

Given the overwhelming independent scientific evidence showing a strong association between last drinks times, liquor outlet density and alcohol related problems, We are strongly opposed to any increase in availability of alcohol (trading hours) and drink strengths for all licensed premises including those with standard trading hours.

An increase in alcohol availability is no doubt likely to result in increased alcohol related violence, related crimes including malicious damage, sexual assaults, disorderly conduct and a reduction in local amenity/quiet and good order of our neighbourhood and wider community. Our ED will also be again overwhelmed by the fallout of these out dated, brutal AHA demands.

As local residents, with children and elderly parents also living in a now safer, urine smell, broken glass, drunk-trauma free suburb, we are strongly opposed to any dilution of our package of the Newcastle conditions, that have displayed proven success in reducing alcohol related anti-social behaviours.

Yours sincerely,



The Turner family

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Newcastle

cc.