

# Sydney Lock Out Laws

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Fri 1/04

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As a DJ, artist manager and record label owner I am writing to you to express my concern for the current cultural state of my home town, Sydney.

The controversial lockout laws have weighed heavily upon me personally.

Some of the more tangible effects of the laws include the serious affect on my person income as a musician; with my DJ bookings are down well over 50% compared to two years ago (I now play a gig every two or three weeks, compared to several each week in 2013-2014).

They have also had a serious effect my fledgling business, October Records, which is a boutique record label and artist management company with a focus on supporting & breaking unique, undiscovered artists on a national level.

Some of our artists now tour the country several times over (or tour Europe on a regular basis) before we can find an appropriate venue within Sydney to host them.

In addition, our ability to build and break new artists has all but dried up - the few remaining venues in the CBD can no longer afford to take a chance booking new and interesting artists, and those that do have significantly lower budgets to work with. Our pool of resources to draw from and find new and exciting musicians to support has all but disappeared, and we increasingly find that we turn to Melbourne and other parts of the country in order to find new talent to work alongside.

Until last year our roster was predominantly composed of Sydney-based artists.

But the personal effects of the lockouts aside, what I am most concerned about is the effect that the laws are having on the very cultural essence of the city of Sydney itself.

Sydney may have beautiful beaches and crystal blue waters during the day, but the laws have all but destroyed what - until recently - made Sydney also a fantastic, exciting and energetic place to enjoy at night. Where are the people, where is the energy, and where is the excitement of a vibrant, buzzing music scene in what was until recently a city regularly producing artists on a global scale?

Why is it that young people feel like the city does not want them to be here anymore, and that their options and support networks have all but dried up? Why is it that more than half of my peer group are moving, whether it be overseas or simply down the road to Melbourne (myself included)?

I'm all for a safe city, but there needs to be consideration and consolation on both sides of the coin before the government hastily wipes away an entire industry with a rushed piece of legislation.

Not to mention that a CBD of empty streets after dark feels a lot more unsafe to me than one bustling with people enjoying themselves.

I look forward to the results of this much-needed review, and hope that at the very least a middle ground can be achieved.

Sydney should not be a city where young adults are treated as an afterthought, or it will be a very soulless place to live in the future.

Regards,  
Andrew Boon

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