

Keep Sydney Open!! - Submission to the Review of the Liquor Amendment Act 2014 by the Hon. IDF Callinan AC QC

WJ

Will Jenkins [REDACTED]

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Mon 5:20 PM



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Hi Liquor Law Review,

As a Sydney resident and a peaceful participant of its once vibrant nightlife, I am grateful for the opportunity to make this submission. I am writing to you because I have personally experienced the impacts that the lockout laws have had on our city – I have seen businesses close, witnessed the loss of jobs, lamented the lack of places to socialise with my friends and mourned the dwindling opportunities to listen to live, local music. As a member of the LGBTI community, these changes are particularly affective - many LGBTI-friendly venues are either closing, changing hands and opening to all, or people who previously didn't visit LGBTI-friendly venues are visiting them and creating an uncomfortable atmosphere.

We all agree that safe streets are a priority, but there are better ways to achieve this. Evidence and common sense suggests that a better planned response could have a greater effect on reducing alcoholrelated violence *without* having the unintended consequences that the lockout laws have had.

What happened?

Sydney's nighttime economy had an awkward start to life. It grew up and out too quickly and without being properly planned for. Before we knew it, tens of thousands of people were coming into a few precincts every Friday and Saturday night, and yet instead of being managed on the scale this required, Kings Cross was left to its own devices. The police were not willing or able to deal with the belligerent or violently inclined. The venues were packed and the streets were chaotic. When it all got too much or you decided it was time to go home, the busses and trains had stopped and the fight for a cab was a long one.

There was also a generational change; while previously these areas had been a mix of bohemian, young, and trendy people, a mass flight from home by the children of the baby boomers meant that older, wealthier residents were downsizing. Not to generalise, but often these residents aren't quite as accepting of the late-night life in the city.

Then, tragically, two young men lost their lives. The city mourned and rightly decided things had to change. The government's response, however, chose to deflect the blame and rushed through blanket laws without consultation. The lockout laws have been a failure.

What needs to change?

The lockout laws have caused irreparable damage to the economic, social and cultural fabric of Sydney. Instead of the 1:30am lockout and 3.00am cease of service, the **7 key actions** below should be implemented together to curb the violence and keep Sydney open for all to enjoy.

- 1 Developing best practice **policing** strategies;
- 2 Investing in 24/7 public **transport**;
- 3 Implementing integrated **urban planning reform, not just limited to the existing entertainment precincts**;
- 4 Encouraging diversification of **afterdark activities across Sydneys**;
- 5 Establishing anti-violence **education & intervention** campaigns;
- 6 **Incentivising well-run venues**; and
- 7 Appointing a **Night Mayor**.

I hope the results of this review will result in a sane, measured, appropriate response to the tragedies which occurred in Kings Cross, and which target the underlying issues which caused them.

Will Jenkins