

# Lockout Feedback

BM Ben McBeath [REDACTED]

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To: Liquor Law Review; 

Fri 1/04

Inbox

To His Justice Ian Callinan AC QC,

I would like to firstly acknowledge the great appreciation for your open review of our very vibrant and essential industry and its legislative changes made on February 2014. It may go without saying, the measures implemented appeared to serve better as a political cannon on 'coming down hard on alcohol fuelled violence', but it was effectively the coward punch inflicted on the industry that has been tirelessly trying to eradicate the very same problem with members of public as well. No sane person wants to injure, maim or violently abuse another, unless in their nature.

Alcohol needs to be controlled, managed and served with diligence. The liquor industry has been tirelessly aiming to eradicate bad behaviour, hold those individuals responsible all whilst trying to have

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Since February 2014, my venues have resulted in 23-51% less turnover and at the same time 14% higher wages to manage the City of Sydney Plan of Management and all its intricacies. We were and still remain, a breach free, incident free, award winning venue, that hosted over 4000 people a week, prior these legislative changed. We have seen this patronage levels drop concurrently by the same aforementioned percentages. Foot traffic outside our venue has now become almost non-existent post 1030pm on any given night.

As a result of the of the reduced turnover, we have had a reduction in 3 full time staff members and 9 casual positions. Our expansion in the hospitality, our offering and our planned redevelopment of the ArtHouse Hotel, had to stop with immediate effect, due to the loss of revenue to warrant the reinvestment.

We are a truly incredible city. However, these laws and legislations have meant that hosting events to 600+ avid followers of live music and specifically world class DJ's has come to a grinding halt. We may be lucky to support between 3 and 4 international events per year, where previously it would be dozens a year. Our options to showcase ourselves as an international city of 'diversity and energy' has been stripped of it's ability to financially support these performers, or encourage them here. They are used to performing later in the evening everywhere else in the world, or in other states of Australia.

It may be unobvious to those who read papers and believe the sky is falling, but we have managed for the 16 years of our existence to cater for this many people without death, without riots and without anything other than great memories to a multitude of clients. I would like to believe logic, reason and personal liability meant for something. Our ability to remain dynamic, exciting and safe, was never hinged on curfew, draconian measures of limits and management. It was a calculated, measured and responsible industry before these legislative changes and did not affect the results of what's happening on the streets, by ineffectively chastising what was happening inside our doors.

We are safe. We are responsible. We are diligently wishing to encourage good, clean, fun behaviour. All whilst trying to see the City of Sydney and its Entertainment precinct remain just that, an Entertainment Precinct. At this rate, we can see its quickly becoming the anti-Entertainment Precinct, coward punched by laws that are not truly showing effect on the very persons who should be held to account.

I have all the faith that you will see these legislative measures were the unfortunate result of circumstance, that the industry itself had no control over, nor should be penalised for. I only hope that you call roll back the lockouts, closures and cessations, to open our doors for the foreseeable future. Without this consideration, our doors will close. It's just how long we can hold on, or until reason prevails. It would be unfortunate outcome after 5 generations of hospitality running in my blood.

Kind regards,

**Ben McBeath**  
Managing Director/Licensee

