

Submission to the review of alcohol

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To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

As a police officer for 28 Years, 9 of which I initially served at Kings Cross LAC, and 9 of which I have most recently served at the Public Order & Riot Squad I have seen and responded to many instances of alcohol fuelled incidents of violence in the Kings Cross, Surry Hills, City and Rocks areas.

I have seen the effect such incidents have, and its not just upon the immediate persons involved, and it's not just at the time of the incident, its on going.

In each case the victim suffers from the initial and on going trauma, and financial loss, the offender suffers from the initial regret then on going process of prosecution and legal fees, the victim, offender, friends, and witnesses all suffer from the initial trauma, loss of time with attending to injuries, supplying evidence and statements to police then attendance of the on going investigation and on going court matters.

The General public suffer from the trauma of witnessing the incidents, adding to their perception of feeling unsafe, not to mention inconveniences that are caused due to the shut down of public areas during crime scene investigations. Business & some times transport suffer for the exact same reason.

As first responders, Ambulance officers suffer in having to respond to such incidents that could well have been prevented. They inturn get tied up with these incidents and are no able to respond to other incidents of fate of health thus putting other lives at risk. And yes there is always paper work associated with these incidents. Not to mention they are often subjected to adverse physiological exposure, assaults and blood/fluid contamination. Their service comes at a cost to the community.

As receivers of patients the hospital staff (Doctors, Specialists, Nurses, Inturns, Security) are tied up with triage, and attending to patients that could well have been prevented from being in need if it weren't for the alcohol related violence, and they too are often exposed to adverse physiological exposure, assaults and blood/fluid contamination. Again this also comes at a cost to the general public.

Police as first responders are immediately placing their lives at risk during attendance and intervention stage of such incidents. Not to mention the risk to public lives on during urgent duty on route to such incidents. Then the resources wasted during the initial investigation stage and the risk of contamination to those officers during initial contact. There's then the on going investigation of canvassing and obtaining statements from witnesses, canvassing and obtaining statements for CCTV, downloading CCTV, obtaining various expert statements and evidence and attendance to other facets of the investigation, preparation of police statements and briefs of evidence, then attendance at court and presentation of all the evidence, over numerous court dates. And yes, the service of Police is also at a cost to the general public.

Then there is the effect such court dates have on all the above involved parties, disruption to their lives and work practices. The cost of Solicitors, Lawyers, Barristers, court Staff, Judges, Magistrates etc..

This is just a small snap shot of what just one assault incident creates. So even if the lock out laws made just 1% difference then @ 35% a big difference has been made. The fact that there has been 35% difference can not be ignored especially when one weighs up the above overview.

Since the introduction of the lockout laws and being actively working on the streets as a police officer during those affected times, I can vouch for the drop in incidents we are required to attend, which is giving us time to focus more on other criminal elements and make the streets even safer.

Yes, some businesses have suffered, but those that have suffered need only blame the premises that have in the past been responsible for fuelling and not restricting the alcohol related fuel violence that is being addresses. Lets hope that there has now been a path paved for refreshing new responsible businesses to thrive and turn these perceived empty streets in to transitional areas for cosmopolitan gold mines.

I will say however, these laws are inconsistent because they are yet to be exercised right across the city and it is clear that in certain areas of the CBD these assaults are still occurring. One in all it should be the case for these laws. Don't have subsequent areas punters can flock to or remain at as this too is a risk for alcohol related assaults to occur.

And just a few last points... "The less money you spend on alcohol at late operated premises, the more money available for you to spend on your family. The less hangovers you have, the more time you can spend with your family. The less time you spend with your family, the more time someone else will."

Lets keep on making our streets safe for our people.

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Regards,

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