

**Submission
No 57**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG- RELATED VIOLENCE

Organisation: Australian Drug Foundation
Name: Mr John Rogerson
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13 August 2014

The Hon. George Souris
Law and Safety Committee
Legislative Assembly
NSW Parliament

Dear Sir

The Australian Drug Foundation is pleased to take this opportunity to respond to the invitation issued by the Law and Safety Committee to make a submission to the Inquiry into Measures to Reduce Alcohol Related Violence.

The ADF believes changes to the behaviour of patrons and managers that is wrought by the amendments to the Liquor Act is likely to take some time to take effect, and we are not aware of reputable data that would allow accurate conclusions to be drawn. For that reason we are concerned that the inquiry initiated by the Law and Safety Committee into the effect of the changes at this time is premature.

The NSW Liquor Act provides for a statutory review two years after they commence, by an independent person so we are interested in why this review is being called now.

The ADF would be happy to provide advice to the committee on the results of the measures adopted by the government to reduce alcohol harms when sufficient evidence to draw conclusions is available. In the absence of such evidence the ADF is not able to provide that advice.

The Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) applauded the NSW Government for the changes it made to liquor sales and licensing conditions in January 2014 and in May 2014.

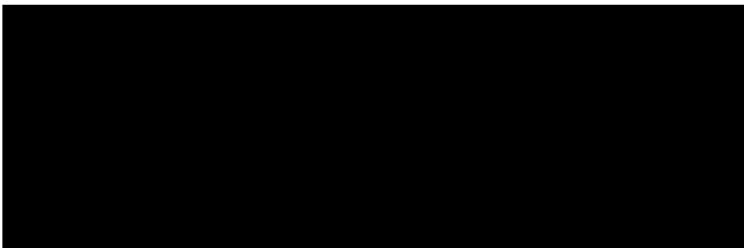
The first set of reforms, which included an earlier closing time of 3.00am and a final entry time (or lockout) of 1.30am were warranted by the high level of preventable alcohol related violence that persisted in and around the Sydney CBD entertainment precincts. A closing time of 10.00pm for packaged liquor outlets was also warranted as likely to reduce late night disruption to the community and possibly to families. The ADF also supported the second tranche of changes in May 2014 that included late night restrictions on types of drinks known

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to encourage and result in extreme intoxication (shooters and doubles) and limits on drink orders after midnight and further limits after 2.00am.

Those changes do not impose unreasonable conditions on licensees and managers of licensed premises who are responsible for preventing the misuse of alcohol on their premises. Nor did they unreasonably reduce people's access to alcohol as the restrictions were at the margin of availability – closing times of 10.00pm for packaged liquor outlets and 3.00am for licensed venues allow patrons of both establishments liberal access to alcohol. Both sets of measures are consistent with international good practice for reducing alcohol related problems, as identified in the research literature and summarised in Babor T. et al *Alcohol No Ordinary Commodity* (2nd edition) published by Oxford University Press in 2010.

Yours sincerely



John Rogerson

Chief Executive Officer

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