

**Submission
No 16**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

Name: Name Suppressed
Date Received: 9/08/2014

Partially Confidential

Inquiry into Measures to Reduce Alcohol and Drug-Related Violence

For the attention of the Law and Safety Committee

9th August 2014

To whom it may concern,

I am very concerned with the current situation in managing licenced premises in NSW. We have a serious problem and much more needs to be done in regards to issuing alcohol licences and routine inspections of licenced premises.

As was reported by ABC News on Thursday 31 July 2014, based on the findings of the Foundation for Alcohol Research:

"Up to 15 people die and more than 430 are admitted to hospital every day in Australia due to alcohol-related illnesses, new research shows.

There's no question that alcohol has never been more affordable and more available in this country. And the issue really is how to address this.

One of the things about the problem is we actually know what to do, the problem has been trying to get people to do something about that.

The 2010 figure marks a 62 per cent jump in the rate of alcohol-related deaths and diseases since 2000."

I live in Woollahra and in recent years there have been a number of complaints by residents about security issues and disturbances created by intoxicated patrons of the Woollahra Hotel. I have concluded that the current system of following licencing requirements is based on an honour system - the management are just meant to follow the rules.

Unfortunately, often this does not happen and no authority routinely checks on them. Following the most recent incidence of vandalism caused by intoxicated patrons of the Hotel, officers from OLGR made a surprise visit and found the Hotel to be in breach of a number of conditions and issued fines. Of course, these breaches happen routinely, not just on the one night the Hotel was inspected.

There needs to be more inspections of licenced premises, especially those that have a large capacity such as the Woollahra Hotel at 460 patrons, by an authority such as OLGR. This would help ensure that managements were vigilant in assisting to reduce alcohol and drug related violence. This would also greatly assist the police who have much more important jobs to do.

As James Walters, Leading Senior Constable, Rose Bay Licensing Office, stated on 17th July, 2012, in a letter to OLGR in regards to a disturbance complaint towards the Hotel;

"I am able to confirm for you that since January 2012, Uniform and Covert police have attended the Woollahra Hotel on no less than 19 occasions for policing related matters."

My other concern is the availability of licences and the proliferation of discount bottle shops.

I, along with other residents, am currently awaiting the decision by OLGR and Woollahra Municipal Council to a development application by Coles to establish a discount bottle shop at 109 Queen Street Woollahra. Besides the fact that there is already a bottle shop at the Woollahra Hotel, about 60

metres away and another bottle shop in Ocean St, approximately 100 metres away, the method of transferring the licence to the proposed location is a great worry.

The licence was issued in 1960 for a hotel in Oxford St Paddington that ceased to exist approximately 15 years ago. The licensee of the original licence is acting on behalf of Coles and will have nothing to do with the operation of the bottle shop.

So even though on paper it is not a new licence - in reality it is.

It will be a new business, in a new location and managed by a new licensee whoever that may be.

The whole process of issuing and transferring licences needs to be looked at urgently and can be one way that the availability of alcohol is not further increased.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.