

**Submission  
No 9**

## **MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE**

Name: Name Suppressed

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*Partially Confidential*

I wish to make a brief statement as a resident of Sydney to the enquiry into Measures to Reduce Alcohol and Drug-Related Violence, with reference to the alcohol legislation introduced in February 2014. I will first say that I regard this as far too early to be attempting to measure impacts of the 2014 legislation, after less than 6 months since their inception - real data on reduced violence etc wont be accessible for at least 2 years after the commencement of the trial.

However, as a resident who has lived at 'Ground Zero' (Kings Cross) for the past 14 years I have the following impressions to submit:

For the past 8 years or so, since City of Sydney Council imposed its Late Night Trading DCP on the residents of Potts Point (aka Kings Cross) we have been living in hell. The LNT DCP allowed for an explosion of late-night-trading premises and liquor licences, so we went from a precinct with a few (3 or 4) pubs and a small handful of fairly well-behaved licensed premises (mostly Sex on Premises venues) to suddenly having HUNDREDS of bars, clubs and pubs, disgorging up to 20,000 drunk and aggressive patrons onto the streets anytime from midnight until 5 and 6am - precisely the night time hours that residents would be attempting - mostly in vain - to have some peace and quiet.

The streets - our suburban and residential streets! - were unsafe to negotiate for residents or visitors, as seen by the high rates of alcohol-related violence and anti-social behaviour, and ultimately resulting in the utterly predictable (we told Council on numerous occasions that it was going to happen) but heartbreakingly tragic murders of Thomas Kelly and Daniel Christie, virtually on our front door steps.

Their deaths received the most publicity and rightly so, but what the public wasn't - and still isn't - hearing about was the ongoing damage to 'revellers' aged from 16-40 who were binge drinking themselves senseless every weekend. We wont know the true horror of those health impacts and the cost to society for some years to come, as we see kidney failure, brain damage and social problems arising from it, not to mention the enormous financial cost this will bring to the community.

So, that was 'before' the legislation in 2014.

Since the lockout and associated legislations were introduced in February 2014, the community here in Kings Cross has been able to breathe, to live, to sleep, and to walk our streets in safety. The massive crowds of aggressive drunks have gone (to where? who knows - maybe we are seeing real social change occurring).

The hospitals and police tell us that what we are seeing and 'feeling' is actually verifiable - violent assaults and hospital admissions are down by 50% - by this measure alone the Legislation has been totally successful.

The AHA and licensees will you they are suffering - I've seen them state that business is down by '40%' - but you must remember that pre-legisltion, business was horribly inflated by unrealistic and unsustainable levels that were always bound fail by bringing violence to the streets and impacting savagely on residents. Business may be down by 40%, but its only because business was unrealistically inflated 200% since 2007 and the introduction of the LNT DCP. So in effect, we are now back to approaching something like equilibrium (but not quite).

But if 'alcohol business' is down, the licensees should take a look around Kings Cross today and see the burgeoning daytime economy flowering - new cafes, restaurants, retail shops, no longer bound to or scared off by the '24-hour alcohol economy' and it's ugly and violent footprint. The place is feeling reinvigorated, and most importantly, SAFER.

Residents welcome and support the legislation, broader society does too, that's obvious, The only ones who will object to the legislation are the alcohol barons who are unable to shift their business model to anything other than grog.

We applaud the legislation. We know it's working. Enforce it. Extend it.