

**Submission
No 69**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG- RELATED VIOLENCE

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Hi there,

I would like to express my opinion and point of view as a 21-year-old male who is an avid supporter of live music. I am a student of criminology, and am currently looking to possibly complete my honours year researching the New South Wales lockout laws in the entertainment precinct. I have found the lockout laws to be a somewhat rushed governmental response to a social issue that I believe spiralled out of control due to a moral panic fuelled by a number of people who are almost completely out of touch with cultures surrounding nightclubs in Sydney Metropolitan area.

I have previously been a frequent patron of Goodgod Small Club and Oxford Arts Factory and, prior to the lockouts, I had never witnessed any assaults, fights or any occurrences that should warrant police, or even security's attention. I had twice previously been to King's Cross for a night out and while I they may not have been greatly enjoyable nights out, I still did not witness any fights. I did, however, notice a somewhat greater police presence. Despite any reputation that King's Cross may have had, the greater police presence compared to other parts of the city did make me feel safer.

However, following the introduction of the lockout laws, I no longer have any faith in visiting King's Cross as I'm aware that the number of patrons, drunk or otherwise, will be much greater following the 1:30am lockouts than when I have previously visited the area. While previously I wasn't a regular visitor to the area, my concerns now extend down to Oxford street and I feel that I can no longer fully support the live music scene that was in stages of great development early this year. We had new venues beginning to introduce live music and it was truly starting to flourish in Sydney, with the city being one of the most convenient locations for patrons such as myself to see live music. This has been changed since the lockouts as I no longer feel safe to be on the street past 1:30am. I now find that my friends and I, rather than staying later than 12 to see multiple acts in one night, would prefer travelling to areas in the Inner West to spend the rest of our night, or just go home. This fear for our safety extends to Goodgod Small Club, which I am aware put extensive effort to create a communal and safe atmosphere in an area that was previously devoid of an enjoyable nightspot.

While this is just one person's experience, it is proof that the lockout laws have had a detrimental effect on those who had no stake in the King's Cross area, and its has led to a loss of faith in my city. I no longer feel that the city is a practical location to enjoy a night out with friends. I no longer feel it is safe when patrons are being prevented from entering a venue, making the venue responsible for the patron's actions, and instead shoving them on to the street leaving them to mill around with others who have been prevented from entering venues. Ultimately, I no longer want engage in the entertainment being provided in the city when the government wants to leave the drunk patrons of a city's night out on the streets where I feel its more likely I will be the victim of a fight than before the lockouts.

Kind Regards,

Alexander Weedon-Newstead