

**Submission
No 15**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG-RELATED VIOLENCE

Name: Name Suppressed
Date Received: 8/08/2014

Partially Confidential



8 August 2014

The Committee Manager
Committee on Law and Safety
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a submission to the 'Measures to Reduce Alcohol and Drug-Related Violence (CBD)' Inquiry.

I am a former co-convenor of the Hyde Park Community Voice Residents' group and a long-time campaigner on alcohol and its impacts, particularly around the Oxford Street Darlinghurst area. **The measures introduced by the NSW government, including 1.30am lockouts and 3am last drinks, have had an extremely positive impact on the Oxford Street area**, with a noticeable decline in intoxicated crowds, antisocial behaviour and violence, and a general improvement in street and neighbourhood amenity.

I note the Kings Cross/Potts Point community have had a similar experience, with both the 2011 Resident's Association and the Darlinghurst Residents' Action Group describing the changes resulting from the laws as "instant and miraculous" (see link 1). No prior measures have had such an impact.

Kings Cross police have hailed the success of the laws, describing Kings Cross as "the safest it has ever been" (see link 2), while the assistant police commissioner said assaults had halved (see link 3).

St. Vincent's hospital has also seen a more than 50% reduction in serious alcohol-related assaults, with the head of emergency, Gordian Fulde, saying "the absolute decrease in severe head injuries has been spectacular and terrific" (see link 4).


It is not surprising that these results have been achieved. Newcastle University professor and alcohol-injury expert, Kypros Kypri, conducted **a 5-year study which found that earlier pub closing times are the key to reducing alcohol-fuelled assaults** (see link 5). At a recent NAAPA forum at NSW parliament house, Professor Kypri said that **introducing an alcohol service cessation time of 2am across the state could result in thousands fewer assaults per year**.

In addition to trading hours, research has found that outlet density can have a large impact on violence and antisocial behaviour. Dr. Phil Hadfield drew on international evidence and found **links between outlet clustering and antisocial behaviour** (see link 6). The liquor freeze imposed on Oxford Street, Kings Cross and George Street has helped to counteract this impact, but it is vital that the freeze is not allowed to expire, or is replaced by a permanent mechanism.

I note there has also been some discussion of venues seeking to obtain exemptions from the new laws. **I believe granting exemptions of any kind would seriously undermine the effectiveness of the scheme**. This occurred in Victoria where a large number of venues won exemptions from the 2am lockout scheme, and it was ultimately reversed.

Thank you for your consideration of the issues raised in this submission.

Yours Sincerely,



Appendix to [REDACTED] submission

1. Kings Cross residents praise lockouts, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-06-06/kings-cross-businesses-say-new-alcohol-laws-are-costing-jobs/5506144>

2. Police say Kings Cross is safer than ever before,
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/police-say-kings-cross-is-safer-than-ever-before/story-fni0cx12-1226948717666>

3. Drunken violence down, say Sydney police, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/drunken-violence-down-say-sydney-police/story-fn3dxiwe-1226869338701>

4. Thomas Kelly anniversary marked with halving of alcohol violence,
<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/thomas-kelly-anniversary-marked-with-halving-of-alcohol-violence-20140705-zsxhw.html#ixzz39lqxiuLG>

5. Earlier pub closing times key to reducing alcohol-fuelled assaults,
<http://theconversation.com/earlier-pub-closing-times-key-to-reducing-alcohol-fuelled-assaults-23829>

6. Night-Time Economy Management: International Research and Practice,
http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/131740/InternationalEvidenceLiteratureReview.pdf