

**Submission  
No 77**

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

**Name:** Name Suppressed  
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*Partially Confidential*

## Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry

██████████  
Nightclub operator,  
██████████  
██████████

The implementation of the new liquor laws has had a severe impact on the viability of liquor businesses within the restricted Central Entertainment Precinct while conversely not significantly demonstrating a reduction in violence in well managed licensed premises. The comments and statistics that will follow come from our business ██████████ ██████████ that operates in ██████████ ██████████. This is an address that has housed a licensed premise since the late 70's when it was known as ██████████ and was more recently home to a nightclub called ██████████ Both of these premises were regarded as some of the most dangerous and poorly managed licensed premises in this precinct and in NSW ██████████ ██████████ was known colloquially by the licensing officers of Surry Hills to be the Sexual Assault Capital of Oxford St an obviously dubious honour. We are pleased to say that since opening for business we have had zero violent incidents and have dedicated our selves and empowered our staff to comply with the edicts of NSW liquor laws.

██████████ and its focus on a higher standard of drinks and entertainment has generally improved the safety and security of its immediate surrounds ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ have voluntarily run quarterly resident meetings, up to this date not a single resident has made a complaint or even turned up to the meetings. At the same time as dedicating ourselves to good management we have had to contend with the real revenue restrictions that have been brought about by the licensing changes. Changes that have seen our business shrink by 26% and our staffing levels by 200 hours per week in addition we have had to cutback on our rostered entertainment and live music. The new legislation has not changed the fact that we are pro-regulation but it has created an environment where operators who are playing by the rules are being significantly disadvantaged by a rushed, inconsistent and incoherent set of rules that without significant education are creating more friction than they are relieving.

### **-Trends in alcohol and drug related violence in licensed venues and general street areas**

We have collated the most illustrating statistical information that we have. This comes from our OLGR mandated incident report books and details each incident in the last 10 months of trade. The majority of reportable incidents fall under 2 categories, ATL (Asked To Leave) which relates to a patron being requested to leave for showing signs that they are approaching intoxication and Refusals, that relate to people being refused entry to the venue for the same reasons.

	Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
	AT	REFUS	AT	REFUS	AT	REFUS	AT	REFUS	AT	REFUS
	L	AL	L	AL	L	AL	L	AL	L	AL

PRE	1	2	3	4	10	13	14	11	1	2
POST	0	2	1	4	9	12	7	11	1	2

The table above shows the average figures for ATLS and Refusals before the start of the revised liquor laws and after. The only significant change is a reduction in ATLS on the weekend nights.

Based on the table above and the static amount of refusals we believe that there are a similar number of people we deem to be intoxicated on Oxford Street. The lockout and the increased police presence has done little to change the dynamic of Oxford Street itself during our hours of trade.

The reduction in ATL is more a reflection of the slowing trade rather than the effectiveness of the legislation. This is the clearest statistical information we have though it matches our anecdotal experience.

After 10 months of trade we have not recorded a single violent incident, this is testament to our rigid policies rather than an effect of the current restrictive liquor legislation.

-The impact of recent measures to reduce violence on Police, the Courts, hospitals and the liquor industry

The impact of these recent measures has been minimal in the effective management of the venue but it has had a large impact in the viability of liquor businesses in the City of Sydney.

We have collated the financial records for the last 10 months to present a clear picture of the effect that this legislation is having on operators, their staff members and contractors.

Our turnover has dropped by 14000 weekly since the start of the recent lockout laws and associated restrictions. That is 26% of our earnings and has led us to restrict the staff hours by 158 casual hours weekly and one full time position of 40 hours. We have had to close one day of the week to mitigate losses.

Further to these business restrictions we have also had to cutback our live music and rostered entertainment. We have dropped our live music entirely and have cut 19 hours of DJ's weekly.

These restrictions have really hit at the bottom line of liquor businesses and will cause the withdrawal of investment money in the Sydney CBD and surrounding areas.

**- Possible further measures to reduce alcohol and drug related violence**

We believe that enfranchising licensees in the legislation process is an important measure to help reduce alcohol and drug related violence. Practically this would be achieved with a few simple measures. Liquor Accord reform that would encourage active participation rather than passive, this could be achieved by changing the executives to more represent the demographic in changing Sydney precincts. An independent industry elected board of representatives that liaise directly with the government on liquor policy. A leveraged penalty and fee system based on performance rather than risk that would reward licensees who continue to use good management and punish those who don't.

### **-In Conclusion**

The measures that have been enacted are having a very high cost on business and employees in the city centre. In our own experience this has not lessened the level of drunkenness that is experienced during trade hours.