

**Submission
No 92**

MEASURES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL AND DRUG- RELATED VIOLENCE

Organisation: Backroom
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To Whom It May Concern

I am presenting this submission on behalf of 'The Backroom' in Kings Cross, Sydney. My name is Joshua Hynes and I am the General Manager (soon to be licensee). My submission is to illustrate the effects that the lockout and drink restrictions have had on our business, as well as the impact that it has had on the customers.

The new laws put in place had the intention of solving certain issues in the Kings Cross area. I believe that this solution of preventing customers from "bar hopping" and preventing patrons from acquiring drinks after certain times will not actually solve the problems that they were introduced for. The affect on our premises due to these changes, is not only hurting the nightclub industry, but a lot of other businesses in the area. You only have to walk around Kings Cross and see how many shops are for lease.

The incidents that occurred (referring to the deaths of the young adults) were not in any licensed premises. The unfortunate incidents happened outside on the street, where there was no-one monitoring the situations. In my opinion, the reason for this is due to the wide range of demographics that kings cross attracts. Im sure there is a pattern in incidents based around certain clientele being attracted to the area. When too many different demographics are out and unsupervised, you can expect issues to occur.

The venues that are attracting this troublesome crowd should be being monitored and enforced, not every single venue in the area. It is unfair to pigeonhole every venue for the mistakes of a few. Remove the injection centre, the stripclubs and a couple of other venues and all of a sudden the crowd you are trying to keep out with these new laws will stop coming in to the area. Do you think these problems happen very often in an area like bondi? The eastern suburbs and potts point/darlinghurst locals crowds are our main demographic.

The venue that I am managing has very strict entry rules. More so than just intoxication, dress regulations and capacity, we also monitor the demographics that are right for our customers. We have a team of 2 security guards and 2 door staff who monitor this every weekend. This can be verified by the data that is accumulated from the new ID scanners.

Our venue has a very low incident rate. We are a small venue that closely monitors everything and everyone to ensure our brand and product is upheld. Two of our major revenue sources were the hospitality industry and after parties for concerts and gigs, who often arrived after finishing work anytime between 2am and 5am. These new lockouts prevent this crowd from being able to enter our premises at all. These crowds attributed for 40% of our revenue which we have now lost.

Our demographic is quite old compared to the surrounding bars and the ID scanners are not helping us in any way. The banned patrons this is trying to keep out would not be permitted entry regardless of the scanner, and all it is doing is preventing our older crowd (30yrs +) from being allowed in if they do not have current approved ID. This is effectively pushing away huge groups from entering our establishment when one or more of said group dont have ID or have an expired ID, even if they are clearly not 17 years old.

Every week it is getting harder for me to keep the venue open with bills. Just the staffing costs related to the new restrictions are hurting us now. We have had to let go of a lot of our employees and stop using a lot of services due to the huge loss in revenue.

The effect this is having on the customers is also hurting us. We are constantly apologising after having to enforce rules such as no re-entry after 1:30. This is upsetting more people than i expect you would see. If a girl goes outside to check her phone or have a ciggarette and cant come back in, she is forced to wait outside until her friends are ready to leave or notice she is missing. This is both unsafe and ridiculous. This rule is actually causing more unsafe behaviour than it is preventing.

Our venue is struggling to stay open since this huge loss in revenue and it is because of these new laws. I am happy to answer any questions you have

Sincerely,

Josh Hynes

General Manager

Backroom, Sydney