

**Submission
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SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

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The lockout laws in NSW have been disastrous. They have not only destroyed the livelihoods of venue owners and Entertainers, but they have destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of people from all aspects of the industry. Rather it be; lighting technician, rodey, sound engineer, sound system installer, stage designer, stage installer, even the companies that employ people to set up interiors for nightclubs from places like LightSounds who install all the lighting, the sound, the maintenance and upgrades. And then all the people who work on the floor each and every night at the nightclub, the mix engineer, the lighting engineer who runs the DMX controller, the visuals display technician who runs all the graphics and visuals that go behind the performer on stage. The performers themselves from DJs to musicians to bands to singers etc. all the way to the bartenders and doormen, security, promoters, cleaners. Even the people who work behind the scenes of the nightclub from the operations team who have to do all the logistics and make sure there are CO2 cylinders ready to be used for the night and then taken out to be refueled, the drinks that come from the supplier and stock take to the financial accountants who work the books and keep the business liquid.

There are a lot of jobs lost and cut due to the closures of the nightlife scene in NSW. Yes I understand the aim of the lockout laws. Its sole purpose was to reduce the amount of casualties in the emergency departments in hospitals. Yes the lockout laws worked perfectly. But alcohol laws and lockout laws need to be dealt with separately.

Now let's talk about the average punter experience. Say me for this example. So I go out to watch my fave International DJ perform live. Let's use Home Venue nightclub down Cocklebay wharf darling harbour as the location and Alexander Popov "Popov" as the DJ for this example. So it's Friday the 5th August 2016 and Popov is performing at Voodoo (the event) held at Home Venue Nightclub. First on is DJ, Simon Lovell from 11pm-1am, followed by Popov from 1am-3am (close). I rock up to the venue at midnight with a friend, we get in and go to dance to the music all night. Popov finishes his set at 3am and the night has gone extremely well. But due to lockout laws we are kicked out of the venue at 3am. We are standing outside and it's 7 degrees Celsius. We wait for Popov to leave the club before having a chat to him and getting a photo. As we are talking and because of some dumb policy that has been implemented for no one knows why, we are told we have to leave the area due to lockout laws even though we are standing outside the venue in a public space. So we walk about 5metres away from where we were just to be told by police this time that we have to move along or get into trouble for disobeying the laws. So now apparently standing outside a venue in a public area with or without any connection to what's going on in the venue is an offence. Great. It's 3:20am and the first train is at 6:15am. Why there isn't a train every 15mins I don't know. They need to have a train every 15mins from midnight to 6am everyday. So we look at the buses and there is one every hour, could probably walk home faster at this rate. So after we get pushed away and start to walk up to town hall station, we see quite a few fights take place. From all different ethnicities of drunk and methed-Up (ice addicts) starting to yell and scream at people who are looking to start a fight and then there are also groups of drunk violent people and gangs who engage in the rage and it becomes a mess. But where are the police? Directing party goers who may or may not be drunk away from the venues they came out of because it's illegal to stand in public property next to a venue that has been running as a nightclub all night! Anyway we get to Town Hall station alright, Uber (didn't exist back then. But let's make this part sound like today) costs a good \$70 to my house/station with the Friday night/Saturday night rates. Taxis cost about \$150-\$160. And I check my bank balance after a night with a friend at the club and after entrance fee of about \$70, my account is down to it's last \$20. But there's money on my opal card so we line up for a bus. Bus 1 appears, "sorry we are full, no one can get on" and then it drives off. Meanwhile there are lots of violent meth heads, violent drunks and gangs forming and coming to the bus areas as they all slowly get kicked out of clubs at the same time. Bus 2 appears, "sorry we're re full" and that was an hour after the first bus!! Now it's almost 6am and we decide to go down stairs of Town Hall station and wait for the first train where it's slightly warmer as it's 7 Degrees outside. So we go and wait for the first train.

As you can see from my story (which is true. That night actually happened) there is a serious lack of transportation when you get kicked out of a nightclub at 3 in the morning. When I first went to a nightclub, it was a godsKitchen event in Home Venue on a Friday night. Another all night trance event and the club closed its doors at 6am and I didn't see anyone being violent to anything and I got the 6:20am train home. Perfect! No waiting around, no being told to move along when I was just standing outside a nightclub and no altercations walking up to the QVB statue. Yes that was back in 2015 and it was the very last weekend of Darling harbour being lockout free.

My biggest complaint that I want to be covered first by the changes of lockout laws is transportation. Trains shouldn't have a curfew and saying "there are buses" is a piss weak response to the situation. The busses are one every hour and because all venues kick their patrons out at the same time, they are always full until the trains are back on again. Big bottle neck. I expect with the new driverless trains that there is one every 4mins 24/7 as they are driverless. As a tax payer that's what I hope to see with the city. Free trams in the middle of the city just like Melbourne and 24/7 driverless trains running once every 4mins.

Now back to entertainment and venues. Yes the livelihoods of a collective amount of industries are a being destroyed or have been destroyed. There has been a lot of closers of industries within industries in Sydney and they have relocated to Victoria. Sydney was once the most vibrant city in the world above New York City in its peak. But with government intervention and lack of decision making, its all been shut down and Sydney is a ghost town after 10pm just like North Sydney.

I suggest eradicating the lockout laws. Letting venues and potentially forcing venues to stay open beyond 4am and let people in and out all night long until the club itself has closed. Separating the lockout and alcohol laws and just focusing on the patrons being allowed in and out of a club. If a club wants to hold a trance event until 6am, then it should easily be able to do so and let people in right up until closing which is when everyone leaves and it may even be sunny (the first time I went clubbing, I left the club and it was sunrise). Alcohol laws is another argument. You should be allowed to buy any type of alcohol in a controlled amount up until 3am. But depending on the person's behaviour and intoxicated level, they should be allowed/not allowed to buy that drink but be given free water instead.

I do hope to see major changes in the right direction with the nightlife and entertainment industry here in Sydney. Would rather it be now than later because it could become too late and we could be in a financial crisis (another GFC) which would just raise unemployment to 7-8% all over Australia and if we can keep something up and running out to keep businesses operating and cash flowing in the economy, then now is the time to do it.