

**Submission
No 386**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Organisation: Drug Policy Modelling Program, UNSW and The Centre for Alcohol Policy Research, La Trobe University

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2nd July 2019

The Hon. Natalie Ward, MLC
Chair, Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy
SYDNEY, NSW, 2000
NightTimeEconomy@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Ward

SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the *Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy*.

The restrictions on late-night trading in Sydney are a well evaluated evidence-based policy intervention that has successfully reduced violence in Sydney's night-time entertainment precincts.

We take a keen interest in evidence-based policy development and evaluation and wish to submit our own work on the impact and public attitude towards public policy measures to reduce alcohol-related harms late at night.

Research we conducted suggests that reducing late-night trading hours reduces alcohol-related violence^{1,2}.

We conducted a systematic review of the peer-reviewed research from 2000-2015, following the internationally recognised PRISMA guidelines for systematic reviews. Our resulting analysis covered 21 separate studies on trading hours and alcohol-related harm from Australia and across the developed world.

Most studies found that when late-night trading hours are reduced alcohol-related violence decreases, likewise when trading hours are increased alcohol-related violence increases. The research included seven studies from Australia as well as studies from Norway and The Netherlands.

This research has important implications for public policy and may be used to guide strategies to reduce the harm caused by alcohol in our communities. For this reason, I urge you to consider this research in the context of the *Joint Select Committee on Sydney's night time economy*.

The imposition of restrictions on late-night trading is supported by one of the strongest evidence-bases in alcohol policy research, and the restrictions on late-night trading in Sydney has clearly led to a substantial reduction in assaults in that city.

¹ Wilkinson, C., Livingston, M., & Room, R. (2016). Impacts of changes to trading hours of liquor licences on alcohol-related harm: a systematic review 2005–2015. *Public Health Res Pract*, 26, e2641644.

² Livingston, M., Wilkinson, C., & Room, R. (2016). Community impact of liquor licences. *Sax Institute for the Ministry of Health (NSW)*, <http://www.saxinstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Community-impact-of-liquorlicences-1.Pdf>.

³ Livingston, M., Callinan, S., & Wilkinson, C. (2019). The impact of high profile restrictions on support for alcohol control policies. *Drug and alcohol review*, 38(4), 399-405.

Recently, we published an analysis of trends in Australian public opinion towards policies that restrict trading hours of alcohol outlets, particularly late at night³.

We examined whether the 2014 NSW's liquor licensing restrictions affected public support for restricting late night outlet trading by focusing on the most recent two waves of the National Drug Strategy Household Survey (a nationally representative household survey conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare).

While decreases in support were found to be stronger in NSW than in other jurisdictions, it is important to note that the majority of Australians still support restrictions of late-night trading.

If you have any questions relating to my work, or would like to discuss the issue further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to raise these important issues with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Wilkinson', written in a cursive style.

Claire Wilkinson

On behalf of the Drug Policy Modelling Program, University of New South Wales, NSW, 2052 and
The Centre for Alcohol Policy Research, La Trobe University, VIC 3083

And

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