

**Submission  
No 452**

## **SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

**Organisation:** Charlie Chan's Bar and Bottle Shop

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## **Charlie Chan's Bar and Bottle Shop**

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To whom it may concern,

The impact of lockout laws not only affects the night time economy in Sydney, but also the nation as a whole, as nightlife currently makes up 3.8% of Australia's economy (Deloitte, 2019). Currently valued at \$27 billion, Sydney's night time economy has the potential to reach over \$43 billion (Deloitte, 2019), so there's no doubt that the removal of lockout laws will be paramount to reach this figure.

Lockout laws have had a profound impact on our business, Charlie Chan's Bar, located at 631-635 George Street, Sydney CBD. In the first year of the lockout laws, our profit decreased by 34%, with a further yearly decline over the last four years. Night time economies are increasingly recognised as driving growth in cities (Deloitte, 2019), however, Sydney is losing out on around \$16 billion a year due to underdeveloped nighttime economy (Fernando, 2019). So, how can we make Sydney a better city when our business, as well as many other establishments, are suffering due to harsh lockout laws? Along with retail shops, bars, clubs and restaurants should also be included in the '24-hour city' with the passing of a new late-night trading plan in May this year, to create a vibrant Sydney and to drive growth in its economy. Since the introduction of lockout laws, Sydney has fallen down the ranks to be voted number 39 in the '48 best cities in the world in 2019' survey and Sydneysiders ranked Sydney the worst in the world for nightlife (Time Out, 2019).

Lockout laws have also decreased the number of job vacancies. When comparing the number of rostered hours per week before the introduction of lockout laws in February of 2014 and now, we noticed a remarkable 20% reduction. If lockout laws are removed, more employment opportunities will become available.

We currently, and will continue to, employ strategies to maintain and enhance the safety of our patrons and community. We practice the Responsible Service of Alcohol and are confident in taking preventative action prior to entry into our venue. Over 40% of patrons refused entry to Charlie Chans are as a result of intoxication or approaching intoxication. Furthermore, we are vigilant in removing patrons who are approaching intoxication safely and in accordance with our duty of care; 49% of all patrons asked to leave are approaching intoxication. A security guard and RSA marshall are present every day from 7pm until 1.30am, with additional security during peak

*Charlie Chans*  
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periods. We have also implemented the voluntary platform, Auscomply, where management and security log all incidents to ensure we are creating the safest atmosphere possible by removing threats to other patrons and the wider community.

Bathroom checks are conducted every hour on a daily basis and headcounts are done hourly during busy periods and on the weekend to make sure we contain our venue and the people within it effectively. As a result of our security and community safety precautions, our venue would be more than capable of handling the removal of lockout laws. We have a zero tolerance for perpetrators and with any escalation of an event, the police are called without hesitation. With on the spot fines issued by police, we have noticed a reduction in rebellion of patrons who are asked to leave, as they are now held accountable for their actions and have changed their behaviour to avoid monetary penalties.

When the lockout laws were introduced in 2014, there was major congestion on the streets with bars and clubs emptying at 3am with limited travel options. Unfortunately, after 11pm now there is no one in the city because the lockout laws have killed the city nightlife by disincentivising people to come into the city. Whilst the introduction of the new 24-hour light rail system will create a safer city by limiting the number of people walking the streets by offering a new way for people to get around, it will be underutilised, as there will not be enough people around to use it. It will be a shame, as there will be a tram stop right outside our venue, which will reduce loitering when patrons are exiting our venue. The introduction of Uber and other ridesharing companies also aids in reducing the number of people on the streets and allows a quick and safe transportation alternative.

As stated, Sydney's night time economy has the potential to almost double and with the new ease of transportation brought by the light rail, this potential is very achievable. With more people entering the city to add to its economic health, we as businesses need to create an offering that is enticing and we believe that removing the lockout laws is the solution to making Sydney's nightlife come back to life.