

**Submission  
No 574**

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

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These lockout laws have destroyed Sydney nightlife and it's night-time economy. I work in the industry as a club promoter and have been doing so for 11 years.

In the past five years I have personally seen a 20-30% loss of annual revenue due to decreased patronage. I have come close many times to giving up. This is my sole source of income and I do not want to become dependent on anyone, including the tax payer.

Additionally, it is no longer safe to be on the streets after lockout. I have had occasion to leave my partner alone on the street to find a taxi because I wasn't allowed to leave the venue to see her safely into one myself. I have also had to do the same for friends. Prior to the lockout I was able to leave and have a cup of tea and a pie and take a break from the club for a short while. Now I can't. I could give you more examples of how the lockout is not only ridiculous in practice but also counterproductive if you want to keep people safe and discourage binge drinking.

But more than anything, these laws were enacted as a knee-jerk reaction to negative media attention in the first instance. For years, we in the industry were asking for more police, and in particular for public transport to be 24 hours. Most problems occurred because problem patrons, unable to enter a venue, were roaming the streets waiting for the trains to start again at approximately 5am. I am sorry that two blokes were killed by two blokes. But perhaps parliament could consider the issue of male violence in this country as well as alcohol fuelled violence as a policy area that needs addressing.

These laws are a result of lazy policy making. You know yourselves that the pilot program that proceeded these laws was shelved because it did not conclude that it would make the streets safer. We need evidence based policy development and implementation and we need to stop punishing good operators for the sins of the few.

Finally, can NSW Police please stop treating all people who enjoy dance music and it's culture as criminals who must be suspected of either committing a crime or intending to commit a crime. Most people enjoy clubbing and dancing without harming themselves or others.

Please review these laws and give our industry an opportunity to make Sydney the thriving and exciting city that it used to be. We are happy to work with the government to achieve a sustainable and safe resolution to this problem.

Mel Fitzpatrick