

**Submission  
No 525**

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

**Name:** Mr Rhys Bobridge

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My name is Rhys Bobridge and I am an entertainer working in bars clubs and late night venues around Sydney.. predominantly around the Oxford Street precinct.

I have worked in queer focused venues almost all of my professional career. What makes queer night life so special and unique is the entertainment aspect of a night out. Whether it be drag shows, DJs, Live singers, or podium dancers there is always an interactive and memorable aspect in gay venues. Before the lockout laws a performer like myself would be able to perform in one venue early in the evening and then perform at a different venue later on, sometimes even up to 3 different venues in one night. Being able to work as many venues as possible in one night means I am able to support myself solely over the weekend with in the night time economy. Since the lockout laws this has all changed. Now that the bars and clubs are losing patronage due to the fact that options are now restricted so that most of night time revellers will all end up in one main venue before the lockout time, leaving other venues empty. Most of my regular shows have either been cancelled entirely or severely cut down making a night out less memorable for the average punter and less income for performers.

I feel that queer focused venues have been unfairly affected by the lock out laws as these venues are usually considered safe spaces for those within our community who may not receive the same acceptance in other late night venues. I also believe with the extra alcohol restrictions within these venues people are more likely to turn to other illicit forms of consumption like pills and other drugs.

I really hope it's not too late to turn I round what was a diverse and free gay scene. Growing up in Adelaide Sydney was always a beacon of gay liberation and fun. Even international friends of mine who visit say this is no longer the case.

It's time to open Sydney up again so that people like myself can maintain a livelihood once more and give back our community the freedom to celebrate how, when and where we choose.