

**Submission  
No 767**

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

**Organisation:** Coca-Cola Amatil

**Date Received:** 9 July 2019

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Committee Chair, Joint Select Committee  
The Hon Natalie Ward MLC  
Via email: [NightTimeEconomy@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:NightTimeEconomy@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Our Ref:  
Shane Richardson

Dear Ms. Ward,

**Re: Written Submission from Coca-Cola Amatil on the Joint Select Committee inquiry into Sydney's Night Time Economy**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to inform the Committee's inquiry into Sydney's Night Time Economy.

Coca-Cola Amatil commends the NSW Government for establishing an inquiry into Sydney's night time economy. We also acknowledge the work being done to protect and enhance public safety and improve the night time experience, including investment in public transport.

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the committee's review and also reiterate our commitment to working in partnership with government and other industry stakeholders to position Sydney as an enjoyable, vibrant and safe city for everyone.

**OUR PERSPECTIVE**

**Support for industry submissions and recommendations**

Coca-Cola Amatil endorses submissions from Alcohol Beverages Australia (ABA) and Australian Hotels Association (AHA).

We support their recommended measures to protect public safety and endorse their guidance that the committee focus its inquiry on the key areas of: providing a diverse night time offering; and safe and reliable transport.

We also support the removal of the term 'lock outs', in favour of existing measures and other recommendations to deliver a safe and vibrant city. The phrase's strong negative connotations have had far-reaching negative consequences for the vibrancy and diversity of the city's night life, and in particular have proved damaging for the city's reputation.

Finally, we recommend the establishment of clear government accountability for the night time economy. We also recommend an official strategic stakeholder forum to work in collaboration with industry stakeholders on sustainable solutions. This collaboration will encourage the exchange of best practice measures, for example the Ask for Angela program.



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## **Coca-Cola Amatil supporting information**

In support of industry submissions, Coca-Cola Amatil submits sales data that provides evidence on the economic impact of the lock out laws on small businesses and the broader hospitality industry, and provides a customer case study to demonstrate the impact of a number of recommended measures in creating attractive, viable and safe night time experiences.

### **1. Economic impact of lock out law**

Because of Coca-Cola Amatil's extensive non-alcoholic and alcohol beverage portfolio, and depth and diversity of our customer base, we have been able to analyse the impact of the lock out law restrictions on the Kings Cross Entertainment precinct, using a comparative analysis of all beverage sales before and after the laws.

Our data shows the impact on Licensed Premises (such as restaurants, bars and pubs) within the Kings Cross precinct was an average decrease in sales of 64% for alcohol, and 52% for non-alcoholic beverages. The impact on unlicensed retail premises (such as convenience and grocery stores) was a decrease of 33% in total beverages sales (average monthly sales between February 2010 and January 2014, versus February 2014 to January 2016).

If beverages sales are considered to be a reasonable indicator of economic activity, this highlights a significant challenge for the local manufacturers like Amatil, as well as small businesses and the broader hospitality industry. These figures support recent research (Deloitte, ImagineSydney Play 2019) and other reports (as referenced in the SMH article [What the hell is going on in Sydney: 176 veues disappear](#)) on the significant impact of the lock out laws on the city's economy.

Should the committee feel it useful, Coca-Cola Amatil would be happy to provide additional recent sales data for Sydney and comparable cities across Australia that may be useful in analysing the relative state of Sydney's night time economy in a domestic context.

### **2. Case Study - The Fiddler, Rouse Hill**

The Mean Fiddler in Rouse Hill was once NSW's most violent pub. Renamed The Fiddler, it is now a thriving suburban destination venue, with strong community ties and a loyal and diverse customer base.

The learnings from the successful transition of The Fiddler, one of Coca-Cola Amatil's key NSW customers, are presented as a valuable case study in how to create safe, enjoyable and vibrant venue experiences as part of an attractive and economically viable night time economy.

#### **Background**

The NSW violent venues list was introduced in 2008, bringing extra license restrictions — like no glasses after midnight and extra security — to venues with more than 12 violent incidents in a year. That year, the Mean Fiddler (as it was known then) occupied first place, clocking 73 incidents in a year. In three years that followed, the venue remained either the most or second most violent place to get a drink in NSW.

By December 2014 however it had undergone a transformation, and received a letter from the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing to confirm it had been removed from the list altogether. Speaking at the time, Brad Jenkins, general manager of the group that runs the pub, attributed the venue's successful repositioning to a combination of increased enforcement, new staff, and a complete redesign that, along with self-imposed lockouts, carpark security patrols and courtesy buses, helped change the culture of the pub completely.

### **Turnaround**

The venue's general manager Sara Belling acknowledges the refurbishment as the trigger for the venue's repositioning within the community. Significant investment (accompanied by a name change) helped revamp the Fiddler's image to appeal to more mature clientele as well as families. The venue reduced its nightclub component, redeveloped the award-winning beer garden, and turned the former Woolshed bar into a sports bar, with a redefined and designed balcony. For women, the existing upper courtyard and wine bar areas were renovated and a new lounge bar was installed. The kids' play area was also upgraded.

Five years on, Ms Belling nominates three key focus areas as key to its ongoing success as a thriving community social hub of the city's northwest region.

#### 1. Quality food offering

A strong focus on providing quality food has been fundamental in attracting a different kind of clientele, increasing the number of mature, occasion-led and families visiting the venue, and moving away from those who are coming just for beverages. The Fiddler takes fresh food deliveries every day, and every item on its menu is made entirely from scratch. Its diverse range of areas allow it to cater for every occasion. Its focus on affordable quality has helped establish the venue as a regular for the local community and, in conjunction with its strong engagement with the local Chamber and other businesses, it now successfully caters for events and functions.

#### 2. Customer service

Supporting its commitment to quality food is a primary focus on customer service. From chefs and wait staff to security, every member of The Fiddler's staff knows customer service is one of its core values and understands their role in ensuring positive first impressions and delivering memorable experiences. This has been particularly evident in the venue's careful approach to finding the right security team and developing its transport management plan. The venue has a zero tolerance approach to staff who speak to customers in the wrong way and sees this customer-focused approach as key to The Fiddler remaining a safe venue.

Customer service is also at the heart of the venue's transport management plan, which it says plays a key role in its late night trading. As well as having a taxi rank on site on Saturday nights, on Friday and Saturday nights (and event days) The Fiddler provides a courtesy bus which offers complimentary picks ups and drop offs within a 5km radius, and primarily services the dinner crowd. The recent opening of the new Sydney Metro line has also had a positive effect on trade. Rouse Hill station is a seven-minute walk away, and the venue's strong reputation and radio advertising is now attracting large groups from the Ryde business district and Norwest business parks for after-work gatherings.

3. Community and local business engagement

In addition to continuing its support of local sports teams like the Kellyville Bushrangers, Ponds FC, Hurricanes Cricket and the Fiddler Golf Club, venue management have worked hard to foster strong ties with the local business community. Fundamental to their success has been engagement and involvement with the local Sydney Hills Business Chamber. In addition to the venue's general manager Sara Belling spending time as a Chamber board member, The Fiddler remains a platinum partner of the Chamber and hosts regular events for the local business community and fellow members. The imminent opening of the new Mercure hotel, adjacent to The Fiddler, will further benefit the venue by enabling it to cater for overnight conferences and business events.

**ABOUT COCA-COLA AMATIL**

Coca-Cola Amatil is one of the largest manufacturers and distributors of ready-to-drink non-alcohol beverages, alcohol beverages, coffee and ready-to-eat food snacks in the Asia-Pacific region. We directly employ around 13,000 people and indirectly create thousands more jobs across the supply chain. Partnering with key suppliers we manufacture, package, sell and distribute the products to more than 950,000 active customers who sell our products to approximately 270 million potential consumers in the countries in which we operate (Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Samoa).

Coca-Cola Amatil's alcohol business operates in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Samoa with approximately 600 employees across the business, 100 of whom are employed in Australia. Our operations include brewing, distilling, sales, marketing and distribution with products ranging from famous international brands like Jim Beam, Canadian Club, Coors and Miller, to emerging locally crafted brews like our Feral and Yenda beers. Our premium alcohol portfolio caters for the diverse needs of our customers, from small bars to the best restaurants, and local retailers to multi-nationals.

Coca-Cola Amatil is committed to working with partners and customers to promote a culture of responsible service, promotion and consumption of alcohol among the 14 million Australians who enjoy our beverages.

Should you require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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Coca-Cola Amatil (Aust) Pty Ltd