

LPA's Response to Supplementary Question

In our submission we noted the significant economic contribution that music festivals make to the NSW economy and the potential impact on the viability of festivals in future under the new regulations.

While this inquiry is focused on the impact of the regulations in NSW, it should also reflect on their national impact.

Music festivals are major drawcards for domestic and international artists and help them to build and grow their audiences. Live performance at festivals helps artists extend their audience reach and provides valuable additional income to that which can be earned through recorded music sales which are increasingly based on pay-per-stream models. Festival performances are often accompanied by side-shows or tours, particularly for international performers.

Given the size and importance of the NSW market, any negative impacts arising from the regulations which make NSW a less attractive destination for touring artists, whether from elsewhere in Australia or overseas, will have a direct impact on their ability to grow their audience. The cancellation or resizing of festival programs to respond to new regulatory requirements and costs will diminish the opportunity for artists to perform, with a knock-on effect throughout the live music ecosystem where artists don't put on festival sideshows in other venues or tour in NSW or elsewhere in Australia.

Therefore, the NSW regulations could have a significant if unforeseen impact on live performance in other areas of Australia by making NSW a less viable destination which in turn undermines Australia's appeal for touring acts.

We also need to address the issue of national consistency in approach to festival regulation and safety practices. There should be a consistent approach across all jurisdictions, keeping in mind some festivals have footprints across state boundaries and also that music festival attendees will also travel across borders. Especially onerous requirements in NSW will add to the cost and complexity for festival producers and again undermine the state's appeal for festival events to the benefit of other locations.

Feedback received from our major music promoters nationally is their concern about the increased cost of doing business in NSW and the potential for ad hoc application of the regulations to both new and existing festivals. The discretionary powers provided do not give certainty regarding decision making or transparency so a promoter looking at future music festivals may decide to go to another state where those risks are less.