

Submission

No 55

**INQUIRY INTO TOBACCO SMOKING IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: [REDACTED]

Name: Ms Jessica Mann

Telephone:

Date Received: 27/04/2006

Theme:

Summary

To whom it may concern,

I received an email today that had been passed down the line from Stafford Sanders at 'ASHAUST', regarding smoking laws in Sydney pubs. I was told about the public forum on May 1 to try and fix the loophole on smoking laws which still allows 75% of licensed venues to be smoking zones. Unfortunately due to work commitments I will not be able to attend the forum, but I wanted to voice my opinion direct to you.

Every day as part of my job I deal with musicians and singers, and I'm a singer myself (although I stick to the theatre rather than pub singing!), and I have heard many concerns regarding their health while performing in such smokey venues. Admittedly, with the recent smoking laws being introduced, venues are much clearer now, and the lack of smoke haze is refreshing. However, last weekend when I went to a pub with friends, I noticed a couple of people sneaking cigarettes into the non-smoking zone. It was obvious - when there is 1 person smoking in a smoke-free zone, it doesn't take long for my lungs to react! I don't have to tell you what smoking does to your health, but I think it's disgraceful that these entertainers are just doing their job and they have to put up with passive smoking - other people destroying their lungs!!! I know of performers who have had to cancel gigs because of what can pretty much be called Smoke Inhalation - it just destroys throats and lungs, and they aren't even the ones smoking! I know people who have had more serious reactions to passive smoking - why should the innocent pay while the offenders keep on puffing?!

I have a few smoker friends who have 'almost been put off smoking' by the new pictures on smoking packets. I believe these are a good idea but not enough.

Gladly, now when I come home from a pub, I don't absolutely wreek of smoke like in the old days. However some venues are still not as well ventilated and well patrolled as the venue I visited the other night (there was still that one smoker that didn't get caught, remember!?) But I know there are venues out there that are worried what the effects of cutting down on the smoking zones will do to their income. Some are still trying to get around the laws just to get the extra punters in. Sure, we all have to make a buck somehow, but then again so do the musicians - how can they make a buck if they can't sing due to illness (possibly caused by smoke inhalation!?). Many of the artists I deal with have been performing for years and years, so possibly the damage has already been done. HOWEVER, I believe it's time to put a stop to it - it's disgraceful that there are people in the world who have DIED due to passive smoking (not being smokers themselves!). I used to work in an RSL club and would come home and stink of beer and cigarettes. I felt ill just working there and would hope that i could work in one of the more ventilated areas. Nowadays there are more smoke-free zones in this establishment and they are marked out in a floor plan as you enter the club, but it's still hard to breathe and I'm glad I don't work there anymore - goodness knows what it'd be doing to my lungs. So you see, it's not only musicians, but other workers who shouldn't have to deal with the health risk. I know the risk is great for venue owners in the possibility of losing money due to the lack of smoking areas, but would they rather people DIE as a result of smoke inhalation (over time) at one of their venues? These places need to look less where the money is and more about health. Some are obeying the rules of certain smoking zones, and as a result they are still trading well and the punters are still there and happy. It's those that choose to defy the law and keep 75% of their pubs as smoking zones, that are the problem.

There was a time when we had a world without cigarettes, so yes, people can live without them. If smokers choose to destroy their bodies, then fine; that's their choice. However, innocent people around them who are non-smokers shouldn't have to suffer and neither should the musicians working their butts off every night to make a living. Some musicians dont mind the smoke and say that "we can't stop people smoking so I live with it; it's part of the job". However, 'the job' shouldn't have to involve putting yourself at risk of throat or lung cancer every night. I don't believe the venues NOR the musicians should have to suffer; rather they can come to some sort of arrangement of non-smoking areas for the entertainment and smokers outside (beer gardens etc). I believe that if a venue cares enough to book live music to get the punters in, they should accomodate them appropriately in a way that's not going to be so much of a health risk.

Thank you for your time in reading this email. I would appreciate if I can be contacted after May 1 to be informed of the result of the forum.

Thanks again,

Jessica Mann

JSC TOBACCSMOKING

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