

INQUIRY INTO TOURISM IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Organisation: Police Association of NSW

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The Director, General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3
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To The General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3,

Please accept a copy of the Police Association of New South Wales submission regarding the Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities. The Police Association of NSW thanks the Committee for the opportunity to submit a response to its Inquiry. The Police Association looks forward to the release of the final copy of the Report.

Sincerely,

Scott Weber
President

Police Association of NSW



Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities

Police Association of New South Wales Submission to the General Purpose Standing Committee No 3 Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities

July 2013

Version Control

Purpose To provide the General Purpose Standing Committee No 3, the Police Association of NSW' response regarding the Inquiry into tourism on local communities.

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Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities

Police Association of New South Wales Submission to the General Purpose Standing Committee No 3 Inquiry into Tourism in Local Communities

The growth of the Night Time Economy represents the colonization of large tracts of public space by the Drinks Industry...from UK Police Federation 2008

Introduction

The following Police Association submission is in response to the General Purpose Standing Committee No 3 inquiry into tourism in local communities. The inquiry was established by the NSW Parliament in order to review the value and impacts of tourism in local communities across NSW. The Standing Committee considers it vital that the industry is operating as effectively as possible and is getting the support it needs to continue to foster and grow throughout the state.

The Police Association's considerations in preparing this submission has been centered around its latest Last Drinks campaign, a coalition of emergency service workers tackling the alarming increase in alcohol-related violence. The Association's submission is informed by way of a number of empirical studies regarding the problems associated with night-time economies – intensified at times by tourism - in metropolitan and regional centers that cause substantial community concern and constitute a significant drain on police, community and health resources. Licensed venues are a key source of social entertainment for the community and the tourist environ, it is important however to identify ways to reduce individual and social harms associated with these settings. Alcohol and its association with licensed premises have been identified as a factor in about three quarters of assaults and offensive behavior on the street. The Association's submission as far as it relates to the Tourism Inquiry will show that high risk alcohol consumption is a function of excessive access and availability of alcohol resulting from extended trading hours and outlet density jeopardizing the public's safety and officers' safety. The focus on alcohol related crime reduces the numbers of police available to service communities particularly in tourist precincts. Police staffing shortages leave communities, organizations, businesses and tourists themselves unprotected.

Tourism on a whole is difficult to define and measure. Its development is fundamentally driven by business, namely the principal motivation for a business or region to serve tourists are generally economic. An individual business is interested primarily in its own revenues and costs, while a community or region is concerned with tourism's overall contribution to the economy, as well as its social, fiscal and environmental impacts. Community support therefore is important for tourism, as it is an activity that affects the entire community. Tourism businesses depend extensively on each other as well as on other businesses, government and residents of the local community.

Statistics recently released confirm that tourism in Australia is a significant industry. It generates billions in spending and contributes nearly \$34 billion to Australia's GDP, directly employs over 500,000 people and earns nearly 10% of total export earnings, making it Australia's largest service export industry. It

also plays an important role in the economic development of regional Australia, with 46 cents in every tourist dollar spent in regional Australia¹.

In NSW, the total tourism consumption is placed at 31.9%, and in monetary value is placed at \$28.7 billion. Tourism and travel account for one in every twenty one jobs in NSW. The tourism industry in NSW is larger than agriculture, forestry and fishing, and arts and recreation services. The total economic value of domestic tourism increased by 2.4% or \$1.7 billion, highlighting its importance to the national economy². NSW is the third smallest state on the Australian mainland, but is the most populous with 7, 272, 800 residents. Sydney is the country's central gateway and financial hub. It is the most popular destination for overseas visitors. New South Wales receives most visitors (34%), most visitor nights (31%) and most day visitors (33%). Queensland and Victoria follow closely with similar statistics.³ There are both positive and negative impacts that can result from tourism and recreational venues depending on the type of venues present, the way they are managed and the capacity of the local areas to accommodate those tourist venues. For instance, the clustering of licensed premises leads to a negative impact that is, an area might reach a saturation point where an additional licensed premises is likely to impact negatively on the surrounding area. Negative cumulative impacts include increased occurrences of:

- Nuisance including noise and anti-social behavior from intoxicated persons;
- Infrastructure capacity problems including limited availability of transport and car parking for patrons and local residents;
- Violence and perceived threats to safety;
- Crime including vandalism, trespass and property damage.

On the other hand, positive cumulative impacts can include:

- The creation of local identity' or status as an entertainment or tourism destination;
- Enhanced vitality of an area;
- Economic benefits;
- Increase in consumer choice;
- Increased ability to manage impacts, for example by concentrating venues around transport to aid dispersal of patrons.

Night time activity is as an important and diverse part of the Australian economy. This is revealed in a report (the first research of its kind) commissioned by the National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee, which accessed a first view of the size and nature of the Australian Night Time Economy. Some of the main findings (and as far as they relate to the Standing Committee's Tourism Inquiry) were:

- The Australian Night Time Economy is valued at \$92 billion dollars in 2011 (this is an increase of 8.2% compared to 2009 and is double the increase in the overall economy).
- Total Federal economy revenue grew by 4.2% to \$2764 billion dollars in 2011.
- 60% of all Core NT (night time) Economy firms are in the States of NSW and Victoria.
- Sydney has most NT Economy firms (ie drink, food and entertainment sectors) whilst Melbourne has shown most firm growth and in the food sector. Entertainment includes theatres, cinemas, sports events and cultural and creative activities.

¹ Tourism Australia, Tourism 2020, Whole of Government Working with Industry to achieve Australia's Tourism Potential, December 2011.

² National Visitor Survey (NVS), Tourism Research Australia, December 2011

³ National Visitor Survey (NVS), Tourism Research Australia, December 2011

According to the study, the LGAs of Melbourne and Sydney are by far the largest NT Economy centres. The study noted the following differences between the NT Economy of both Melbourne and Sydney.

***Melbourne:** The detailed breakdown of the Melbourne figures confirms that Cafes and Restaurants are the dominant part of the NT Economy and they account for the only material growth from 2009 to 2011. We know from the distribution of NT Economy businesses that Melbourne has the strongest and possibly the most concentrated Café and Restaurant activity base in the Australian Federal economy. By 2011 the Food sub segment in Melbourne has become nearly 61% of all revenues. At the same time Drinks revenues have dropped from \$284 million to \$260 million and to 11.6% of sales. Within the important Entertainment section Gambling activities and Creative and performing Arts have reduced by substantial numbers at \$64 million and \$53 million respectively.*

***Sydney:** 2011 data identifies a small overall increase in drinks firms from 416 to 441. A reasonable view would be that Drink outlets in Sydney have slightly increased. The largest firm increase in the Entertainment sub segment comes from Creative and Performing Arts. Within entertainment there has been decline in sports and recreation employment but creative and performing arts have stayed more or less the same and are the main component of the Sydney entertainment sub segment with 36% of its employment. This is closely followed by gambling activities.⁴ In summary Sydney LGA remains the largest inner city LGA with over half of its activity in food services and moreover its entertainment services alone deliver twice the revenue of its drink businesses.*

Table: Comparison of NTE Core Sales Turnover (A\$m) 2009 with Metropolitan Sydney and NSW⁵

Activity Type	Sydney LGA		Sydney SD		New South Wales	
	Turnover	%	Turnover	%	Turnover	%
Drink	\$425.0	15.7%	\$5 115.3	24.3%	\$7 697.6	23.4%
Entertainment	\$868.6	32.1%	\$5 863.7	27.9%	\$9 949.9	30.2%
Food	\$1 408.5	52.1%	\$10 066/4	47.8%	\$15 263.9	46.4%
Total	\$2 702.1	100.0%	\$21 045.3	100.0%	\$32 911.4	100.0%

It is clear from the evidence that the nighttime economy (inclusive of tourism) generates significant financial benefits for Sydney however the role played by alcohol is only a part of the mix of activities and should not be overstated.

Sydney as an emerging global city

Research indicates that Sydney is already perceived as Australia's only global city and first point of call for business and tourism.⁶ Its night time economy too brings with it great economic contribution and Sydney as well as many other global cities value the contribution of a vibrant night time economy. In 2009 a comparative study was conducted by Suzie Mathews regarding the night time economies of eight

⁴ National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee, The Australian Night Time Economy, A First Analysis, 2009-2011

⁵ Terry Bevan, Alistair Turnham, Michael Lester, Sydney Night Time Economy: Cost Benefit Analysis, A Report for the City of Sydney Council, 4 November 2011.

⁶ Brand Sydney, 2010.

large and complex global cities. In her research, Mathews explores management systems utilized by these cities inclusive of closing times and provides evidence that to attract tourists there does not need to be a 24/7 trading environment. Many Australian cities now allow longer trading hours than many other international cities, such as New York, Vancouver London, and Amsterdam. All cities in California including Los Angeles and San Francisco have a 2:00 am closure mandated by State regulation⁷. Mathew's paper is further examined in detail later in our report.

Generating vigorous figures can and has delivered opportunities, jobs, security, taxes and value through the operation of the night time economy. It has also provided a context in which an urban space may be captured and enjoyed by a wide range of citizens and to which adds to the appeal of a place for business and tourism⁸ (as already mentioned). Business and social activity that goes on in the night hours is an important part of the NSW economy and society. On the other hand, there lies the concern about the impacts of behavior and the costs of that behavior where people gather in venues that legitimize the excessive consumption of alcohol and which therefore may provide a setting for non-legitimate or anti-social behavior. The night-time economy is an important part of any modern city but it is a risk-laden environment⁹. It is these types of impacts in risky drinking that NSW police and the communities alike are concerned with.

Research has consistently shown that violence and harm in late-night entertainment areas peaks between midnight and 3 am. It is most frequent on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights (Chikritzhs & Stockwell 2002, 2007; Ireland & Thommeny 1993). A number of issues have been identified that may exacerbate levels of short-term harm associated with risky drinking, including: excessive alcohol consumption at licensed premises, consumption in public areas, and a lack of transport and security in entertainment precincts (Graham & Homel 2008). Factors which increase risky drinking and associated harms in licensed premises include: patron demographics and mix; levels of comfort, boredom and intoxication; promotions encouraging rapid alcohol consumption; and the behavior of security staff. Violence has also been shown to be associated with poor management and policy, lax surveillance, lack of transport options for patrons, and inappropriate bureaucratic controls (Graham & Homel 2008; Homel et al. 2004; Hughes 2007).

Drinking and Alcohol-Related Harms Among Young People

For young people, drinking alcohol is a rite of passage and an integral part of youth culture (de Crespigny, 1999; Leigh, 1999; Rossow, Pape & Wichstrom, 1999; Holder et al, 2000; Grube & Nygaard, 2001). Preferred drinking venues for young people aged 20-29 years, particularly males, are pubs, clubs and wine bars. Both licensed venues and youth are risk factors for acute alcohol-related harms¹⁰. One in four young people (aged between 15 and 24 years) reported that in the past year they had consumed alcohol, at levels associated with short-term harm, on a weekly to monthly basis. More than 40% of young people reported having consumed more than 20 standard drinks on a single occasion during that time. This trend is concerning given that estimates indicate that up to 47% of alcohol-related deaths can be attributed to single sessions of heavy episodic drinking.

⁷ Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Quick Summary of Selected Laws for Retail Licensees, Licensee Education on Alcohol and Drugs, State of California, 2004

⁸ National Local Government Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee, The Australian Night Time Economy, A First Analysis, 2009-2011.

⁹ Hunter New England Population Health, Dealing with Alcohol-Related harm and the night-time economy (DANTE), Final Report, Deakin University, April 2012

¹⁰ Doherty, S. and Roche, A., Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice In Policing, A monograph for police and policy makers, April 2003.

Pre-drinking

'Pre-drinking' or 'Pre Loading' involves planned drinking, usually at someone's home or hotel room, prior to going to a social event, typically a bar or nightclub. Pre-drinking has been identified as one of the major impediments to responsible service of alcohol, and a major predictor of subsequent intoxication and an increased likelihood of experiencing violence. Although it sometimes occurs in preparation for events where alcohol is not available, especially by underage drinkers, pre-drinking has particular relevance to policies influencing licensed premises. Drinking before entering licensed venues is not a new behaviour, but it appears to have become an increasingly popular and typical activity among young adults. Pre-drinking has been associated with increased risk of intoxication, violence and unwanted sexual encounters. Pre-drinkers were more likely to exhibit additional consumption behaviours that have been linked to alcohol-related harm. They were more likely to report consuming energy drinks and mixing energy drinks with alcohol, and to report consuming illicit drugs. Results from several other studies investigating pre-drinking have indicated that time of night can have a mediating effect on pre-drinking amount, in that participants surveyed later at night were more likely to pre-drink than those surveyed earlier in the evening. In some examples, restrictions of trading hours have been associated and shown to be effective with positive outcomes for pre-drinking rates throughout the night. Younger participants were significantly more likely to report pre-drinking. The most commonly reported motivation for pre-drinking was price (61% of pre-drinkers) was likely to be the most important to younger participants¹¹.

Energy drinks

A recent and emerging consumption practice in the night-time economy is to combine alcohol with energy drinks (AEDs). These AEDs are currently the subject of considerable media attention in Australia and internationally, with some countries moving to impose stricter regulations on their sale and supply. However, in Australia, research on AEDs is scarce, limiting meaningful public health discussions about the issue. From the limited amount of research available it is known that people who consumed alcohol with energy drinks were more likely to report riskier drinking practices. Given on average that people have already exceeded the recommended daily intake of alcohol by midnight, it could be argued that restrictions would be more effective if they were put in place around 10pm.¹²

Under-Reporting of Alcohol-Related Offences

A large proportion of alcohol-related offending remains unreported. Levels as high as 79% are indicated by non-fatal assault data in Australia (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2001). The 1998 Australian Crime and Safety Survey (ACSS) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998) measured crime victimisation by prevalence, incidence and average number of incidents per victim. The survey found high levels of under-reporting to police which were attributed to police procedures and attitudes, victim attitudes and data collection methodology. Reasons cited for data discrepancies included:

- inquiry by police but no report made
- insufficient information provided to police
- insufficient evidence to warrant submission of report
- incorrect coding by offence category

¹¹ NDLERF, Patron Offending and Intoxication in Night-Time Entertainment Districts (POINTED), Final Report, A/Prof Peter Miller, Monograph Series No. 46, 2013

¹² NDLERF, Patron Offending and Intoxication in Night-Time Entertainment Districts (POINTED), Final Report, A/Prof Peter Miller, Monograph Series No. 46, 2013

- the Crime and Safety Survey only related to residents of Australia who were 15 years and over, and female victims of sexual assault who were 18 years and older (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998).

There were 618,300 people aged 15 years and over (4.3% of the Australian population) who reported being a victim of assault in 1998. Fourteen percent of these occurred in pubs and clubs. However, only 15% of assaults occurring in these locations were reported to police, compared to a rate of 27.7% for all assaults (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998). In 1998, 47,300 sexual assaults against 30,100 victims were reported to police (0.4% of the population) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998). Five percent (1,500) of these occurred in a pub or club. Only a third (32.6%) of sexual assault incidents were reported to police¹³.

NSW Night-Time Economy

New South Wales, in line with other states around the country, has experienced a systematic deregulation of liquor licensing over the past three decades. Expanded nightlife has been promoted as a solution to stagnant manufacturing and industrial sectors that had left many cities and regional precincts bereft of economic activity. Subsequently, New South Wales has experienced a dramatic growth in the number of liquor licenses in the state. In 2011, NSW had 15,115 liquor licenses (Casino Liquor and Gaming Control Authority 2011b), equating to one license per 470 residents (Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education 2012). While areas of Sydney's CBD have been subjected to a licensing 'freeze' since 2009, the number of liquor licenses in the state has grown substantially. During the 2010–11 financial year 2,557 new licenses were granted across the state. Sydney has the highest density of liquor licenses with 2,087 (Casino Liquor and Gaming Control Authority 2011b). Apart from the above-mentioned restrictions in selected spaces within Sydney city, there are no fixed restrictions on the trading hours of licensed venues in New South Wales. These hours are determined during the initial licensing permit process, but can be extended at a later time by applying to the NSW Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority (ILGA)¹⁴.

Striking the right balance (Matthew 2009) between a vibrant night time economy and amenity and safety is a challenge facing New South Wales today. Bringing together the pieces of this very complex, social and often political problem area is a challenge¹⁵. Alcohol-related problems are a major cause of social disorder and illness in Australia. The estimated cost of alcohol to the community is \$15.3 billion including crime, violence, treatment costs, loss of productivity and premature deaths¹⁶. Given that only a given proportion of total crimes committed get reported to or detected by police, these cost estimates are necessarily underestimates of the true level of alcohol related costs. Alcohol (as mentioned) has also been identified as a factor in about three quarters of assaults and offensive behavior on the street. Similarly, alcohol at or over 0.05 g/100 mL (%) was found to be present in 29.1 percent of all drivers in fatal accidents in Australia (Drummer et al. 2003). High-risk alcohol consumption causes more than 400 road deaths and 7,700 serious road injuries requiring hospitalisation each year, at an estimated cost to

¹³ Doherty, S, Roche, M, A, Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing, A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers, April 2003

¹⁴ NDLERF, Patron Offending and Intoxication in Night-Time Entertainment Districts (POINTED), Final Report, A/Prof Peter Miller, Monograph Series No. 46, 2013

¹⁵ Doherty, S, Roche, M, A, Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing, A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers, April 2003

¹⁶ David J Collins, Helen M Lapsley, The avoidable costs of alcohol abuse in Australia and the potential benefits of effective policies to reduce the social costs of alcohol, National Drug Strategy, Monograph Series No. 70, 2008

the community of more than \$1.34 billion (National Drug Research Institute 2000)¹⁷. The night time economy undoubtedly brings a great economic contribution to communities across New South Wales but at the same time (as mentioned) alcohol costs communities significantly in terms of policing, hospital admissions, waste and cleansing, violence and anti-social behavior. The aggregate of a range of societal costs ie costs to the criminal justice system, costs to the health system, costs resulting from lost productivity and costs related to alcohol-related road accidents, substantially outweighs the tax revenue generated from the sale of alcohol.

The NSW Auditor General has recently reported that alcohol abuse costs the state of NSW around \$3.87 billion per annum¹⁸. This represents a cost to NSW households of around \$1,565 each year¹⁹. The cost to Government alone is estimated by the Auditor General to be \$1.029 billion²⁰. In contrast the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education estimate the maximum fees collected by NSW Government for liquor licensing in 2011-12 was only \$1.090 million.

The proportion of people drinking at a high risk level has increased over the past decade, from 8.2 percent in 1995 to 10.8 percent in 2001 and 13.4 percent in 2004–05 (after adjusting for age differences) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). Most (72% or 310,000) men who were physically assaulted by another male said that the perpetrator had been drinking or taking drugs, and 28 percent said that they themselves had done so (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007). Almost half (47% or 92,300) of the women physically assaulted and most (84% or 50,600) of women who were sexually assaulted by a man said that the perpetrator had been drinking or taking drugs (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2007). High-risk drinking is more common in rural and regional areas than urban areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006) and rates of alcohol-related hospitalisations are consistently higher in regional areas of Australia compared with metropolitan areas (Chikritzhs et al. 2000)²¹.

Strategies that have been reported as effective in entertainment precincts involve regulating the physical availability of alcohol and modifying the drinking environment. Babor et al. (2010) reported that the most effective methods of regulating availability at the local area are restricting the hours and days of alcohol sales, restricting venue density, and different availability by strength of alcohol (Babor et al. 2010; Chikritzhs et al. 2007). Modifying the drinking environment includes strategies such as staff/management training in managing aggression, staff training in the responsible service of alcohol (RSA) with enforcement, and enhanced enforcement of liquor legislation (Babor et al. 2010)²².

¹⁷ Hunter New England Population Health, Dealing with Alcohol-Related harm and the night-time economy (DANTE), Final Report, Deakin University, April 2012.

¹⁸ Audit Office of NSW, NSW Auditor-General's Report, Performance Audit, Cost of Alcohol Abuse to the NSW Government, August 2013

¹⁹ Audit Office of NSW, NSW Auditor-General's Report, Performance Audit, Cost of Alcohol Abuse to the NSW Government, August 2013

²⁰ Audit Office of NSW, NSW Auditor-General's Report, Performance Audit, Cost of Alcohol Abuse to the NSW Government, August 2013

²¹ Hunter New England Population Health, Dealing with Alcohol-Related harm and the night-time economy (DANTE), Final Report, Deakin University, April 2012.

²² Hunter New England Population Health, Dealing with Alcohol-Related harm and the night-time economy (DANTE), Final Report, Deakin University, April 2012

Police Association of NSW, Last Drinks Campaign

For many years the Police Association has been concerned about the unacceptably high levels of alcohol-related violence directed at our members and the community when dealing with the effects of intoxicated persons in and around late trading (early morning) licensed venues. The following facts and figures are able to be found in the Police Association's Last Drinks Campaign website www.lastdrinks.org.au. The Association is currently part of a coalition of emergency services workers, including Doctors, Nurses and Paramedics to address the alarming levels of alcohol-related violence. The Association is also a founding member of the NSW ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance, a coalition of 31 health, community, law enforcement, and emergency services and research organisations working to promote evidence-based actions to prevent alcohol-related harms in NSW and the ACT.

It is clear that early morning alcohol-related violence mainly occurs where extended late trading licensed premises are concentrated and is the major cause of injury and hospital admissions in areas surrounding the same "hotspots". The recent analysis by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research of the Newcastle s104 Liquor Administration Board Decision of March 2008 that reduced trading hours to 3:30 am, introduced lockouts after 1:30 am and imposed restrictions on the sale of high volume alcoholic drinks after 10:00 pm, provides impressive evidence that the incidence of alcohol related assaults can be significantly reduced by the introduction of a suite of modest measures aimed at reducing access to and the availability of alcohol. The Newcastle decision produced large reductions in assault rates by 37% by reducing the available time to consume alcohol in the late trading premises by bringing forward closing time by one and a half hours. This is not only an Occupational Health and Safety issue for doctors, nurses, ambulance paramedics, health workers and police, but a matter of vital public interest in decreasing the risk of assault for members of the public, releasing emergency services workers for other duties and reducing the substantial costs associated with treatment of alcohol related assault victims.

"When a suite of modest measures, including reduced trading hours, lock-outs and restrictions on high alcohol-content drinks were introduced in Newcastle the number of after dark assaults dropped by 37 per cent. They have been trialed voluntarily at other places and have worked really well." From Sydney, Jan 27 AAP. NSW govt anti-binge drinking ad criticized.

The Background

Unacceptably high numbers of police officers are being subjected to violent assault from intoxicated offenders, especially in the early hours of the morning. Far more disturbing is the number of other frontline emergency services workers who are also the subject of alcohol fuelled assaults – ambulance officers, nurses and doctors who are simply attempting to give assistance and care to those who have been injured as a result of the effects of alcohol. From January 2008 to December 2008, there were 2,855 assaults against police according to the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR). Of these, the NSW Police Force estimates that close to 70 percent were alcohol-related. During the same period, 6,370 non-domestic assaults against members of the public were recorded as occurring inside licensed premises. This number represents 15 percent of all recorded non-domestic assaults in NSW. Another 19,456 nondomestic assaults occurred in public places, retail areas or car parks. Given that many recorded non-domestic assaults happen shortly after patrons have left licensed premises, it is reasonable to assume that a number of these latter assaults are also linked to licensed premises. 56 percent of all liquor offenses in NSW (10,185) in 2008 occurred on licensed premises – a number that

would indicate a serious failing of the licensees to take the responsible service of alcohol laws seriously. A further 6,955 liquor offenses occurred outdoors – some, no doubt as a result of the sale of alcohol from licensed premises. From 2004 to 2008 there has been an alarming growth in the number of alcohol-related non-domestic violent incidents – an average annual increase of 6.4 percent, from 15,398 in 2004 to 19,735 in 2008.

The most recent Recorded Crime Statistics report released by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOCSAR) showed a downward trend in the number of assaults occurring on licensed premises. For the period from January 2007 to the end of December 2012 the number of assault incidents (including domestic violence related assault) recorded by police as occurring at licensed premises fell from 1,620 to 1,236 (or 23.7 per cent). Alternatively, the number of non-domestic violence related assaults for the year 2011 was 37,353 incidents; the following year, the number of assaults had declined to 35,230 incidents. Also, the number of recorded incidents for Assault – Police for the year 2011 was 2,492 incidents; in the following year the number had declined to 2,216 incidents²³. Over the same period that assaults at licensed premises have declined, there have been a number of significant changes to liquor licensing regulation in NSW. They can be grouped into two interventions: the changes made to the Liquor Act 2007; and the introduction of the ‘3 strikes’ legislation in 2011. Changes to the Liquor Act 2007, which came into effect in July 2008, increased the powers of the Director the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (OLGR; previously the Department of Gaming and Racing). These enhanced powers included the Director of OLGR having the authority to impose additional conditions on liquor licenses, such as lockouts and curfews, and to determine disturbance complaints. OLGR had already taken enforcement action against premises identified by BOCSAR as having high assault rates in May 2008.

These numbers confirm what is already known – that a great deal of violence occurs in and around licensed premises.²⁴ Research also shows that the peak time for violent offending is weekend nights and the peak location is in and around pubs and clubs.²⁵ These trends are not unique to NSW or Australia, and research consistently shows that alcohol is strongly associated with violent crime. There is evidence to show that Australia has high levels of violence compared with other countries.²⁶ In a 2002 study of Perth hotels during the period 1991 to 1997: 45 (24%) of the 188 hotels meeting study criteria were granted an extended trading permit for 1 AM closing, whereas the rest continued to close at midnight. After controlling for the general trend in assaults occurring throughout Perth hotels, there was a significant increase in monthly assault rates for hotels with late trading following the introduction of extended trading permits. This relationship was largely accounted for by higher volumes of high alcohol content beer, wine and distilled spirits purchased by late trading hotels. Conclusions were that late trading was associated with both increased violence in and around Perth hotels and increased levels of alcohol consumption during the study period. It is suggested that greater numbers of patrons and increased levels of intoxication contributed to the observed increase in violence and that systematic planning and evaluation of late trading licenses is required.”²⁷

²³ NSW Recorded Crime Statistics, 2012

²⁴ Graham, K et al. 1980 “Aggression and Barroom Environments”, *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, vol. 41, pp277-92

²⁵ Finney, A 2004 “Violence in the night-time economy: key findings from the research” Home Office, UK

²⁶ Institute of Alcohol Studies, Factsheet “Alcohol and Crime” 24th July 2007

²⁷ Chikritzhs, T & Stockwell, T 2002 “The impact of Later Trading Hours for Australian Public Houses (Hotels) on Levels of Violence” *J. Stud. Alcohol* 63: 591-599

As drug and alcohol abuse spills from the streets and into our emergency rooms and hospitals, you find a growing number of people who seem to believe they can get away with violent and aggressive behavior against nursing staff who are caring for them.”

The Newcastle Trial

In March 2008, as a result of a complaint against four Newcastle hotels and growing community concern about alcohol-related violence in and around the Newcastle CBD, the NSW Liquor Administration Board (LAB) imposed a number of restrictions on 14 licensed premises in Newcastle. The most significant of these restrictions were:

- The imposition of a lockout from 1am for all 14 hotels; and
- Bringing forward the closing time to 3am for the 11 premises that were previously licensed to trade until 5am and to 2:30am for the three premises that had previously been licensed to trade until 3am.

A number of additional restrictions were imposed on all 14 hotels:

- A requirement that licensees produce a Plan of Management within six weeks of the ruling;
- A requirement that licensees arrange for independent audits to be carried out on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance with this Plan of Management;
- A requirement that licensees employ a supervisor to be on the premises from 11pm until closing with the sole purpose of monitoring responsible service of alcohol;
- A prohibition on the sale of shots, mixed drinks with more than 30ml of alcohol, ready mixed drinks stronger than 5 per cent alcohol by volume after 10.00pm;
- A prohibition on the sale of more than four drinks to any patron at one time and a requirement to provide free water stations on every bar;
- A requirement that licensees ensure patrons not stockpile drinks;
- A requirement that the sale of alcohol cease 30 minutes prior to closing time;
- A requirement that licensees notify all staff members of these restrictions within 14 days;
- A requirement that each of the licensees enter into an agreement to share a radio network to enable management and security of each hotel to communicate with one another.

Such restrictions on licensed premises were unheard of in NSW and rare throughout the world.²⁸

BOCSAR undertook an initial evaluation of the trial twelve months after it commenced. The evaluation aimed to assess:

- Whether the trading hour restrictions had any impact on the total number of alcohol-related assaults in and around the Newcastle CBD;
- Whether there was any geographic displacement of alcohol-related assaults to areas neighboring the Newcastle CBD; and
- Whether the restrictions had any impact on the time of day upon which assaults were recorded as occurring in the Newcastle CBD.

The closest major centre of licensed premises to the Newcastle CBD is Hamilton, a suburb some 4 kilometers away. No restrictions were placed on Hamilton licensed premises and data from Hamilton were compared to the Newcastle CBD for the study period (from 1 April 2004, before the trial, to 31 March 2009). The results were spectacular. Assaults after dark fell by 29 per cent (133 per year) in

²⁸ Jones, C et al. 2009 “the impact of restricted alcohol availability on alcohol-related violence in Newcastle, NSW” Crime and Justice Bulletin No137 NSW Bureau of Crime

Newcastle. Recorded crime and linking data revealed a significant reduction in alcohol-related assaults in the Newcastle CBD but not in Hamilton. There was no evidence of any geographic displacement of assaults to other licensed premises or neighboring areas. This is an important result, as an argument against reducing opening hours is that assaults will simply be displaced to other locations where the restrictions do not apply. All data sources revealed a significant decrease in the proportion of assaults occurring after 3am in the intervention site but not in the comparison sites. Collectively, the data provides strong evidence that the restricted availability of alcohol reduced the incidence of assault in the Newcastle CBD. It must be kept in mind that these outcomes occurred from a mere 2 hour change in closing hours (from 5 am to 3 am). For most patrons, this was not a significant imposition. The Newcastle trial gives us the first and best reliable evidence that a reduction in opening hours can have a significant impact on violence in the early hours of the morning.

Subsequent Studies

Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian City

In 2008 research was conducted by Kypros Kypri, Craig Jones, Patrick McElduff and Daniel Barker regarding the NSW judiciary restriction of pub closing times to 3am (and later to 3.30am) in Newcastle in which the researchers sought to determine whether the said restrictions reduced the incidence of Police –recorded assaults. The researchers adopted a non-equivalent control group design in which the CBD was the intervention area and a nearby area with similar characteristics served as the control area. Hamilton was selected as a control area because, like the CBD, it was considered an entertainment precinct and included several late trading pubs of similar character to those in the CBD, and because closing times was not curtailed. It would also be subject to similar economic, transport and climatic conditions, all of which are known to affect drinking behavior in public locations. In addition to the changes in closing hours, licensees were required to adopt a plan of management; were subject to compliance audits; had to have a dedicated responsible service of alcohol officer from 11 p.m. until closing; could not serve shots after 10 p.m.; had to cease selling alcohol 30 minutes prior to closing; could not permit stockpiling of drinks; had to adopt shared radio procedures; and all staff had to be notified of the conditions.

As already mentioned, data was collated in the form of police-recorded assaults in the CBD before and after the restriction and compared with those in Hamilton. The findings included that in the CBD recorded assaults fell from 99.0 per quarter before the restriction to 67.7 per quarter afterward. In the same periods in Hamilton, assault rates were 23.4 and 25.5 per quarter. The relative reduction attributable to the intervention was 37% and about 33 assault incidents were prevented per quarter. Therefore, the research indicates that a restriction in pub closing times to 3/3.30 am in Newcastle, NSW, produced a large relative reduction in assault incidence of 37% in comparison to a control locality. Furthermore, when the data was analyzed separately by time of incident, effect estimates were markedly larger for assaults occurring between 3 am and 6 am. The restriction in closing time appears to have produced a reduction in assault incidence against a backdrop of a stable trend in the control area. The research indicates that in practice it is rare for physical availability to increase without also increasing the promotion of alcohol eg happy hour, advertising etc. The research also indicates factors not related directly to alcohol consumption which affects the incidence of assault, e.g. overcrowding, social deprivation and patron mix. The research suggests that by restricting closing times, the intervention, may have reduced the number of people coming into the CBD and thereby reduced the likelihood of aggressive interactions between patrons within, outside and travelling between licensed premises. Also, there does not appear to have been geographic displacement to Hamilton i.e. an

increase in assaults as a consequence of patrons either moving to Hamilton from the CBD after 3.30 am closing or choosing to frequent Hamilton pubs instead of those in the CBD²⁹.

Research evidence for reducing alcohol-related harm and impact of Newcastle s104 licensing conditions, 2008-2011

The Hunter New England Health and Associate Professor John Wiggers (Hunter New England Population Health Director from the University of Newcastle, School of Medicine and Public Health) conducted further evaluation in the effectiveness of Newcastle licensing restrictions (introduced in 2008), to determine if the initial benefits were maintained after three years and whether there were broader benefits in terms of reductions in anti-social behavior and emergency department presentations. Wiggers utilized the same analytical procedures as in the previous evaluations (see above). Briefly, the research findings showed significant reductions in alcohol-related problems. Wiggers' findings are consistent with evidence that show that late night trading is a significant determinant of alcohol-related crime. His findings included;

- 37% reduction in night-time non-domestic assaults requiring police attention
- 50% reduction in night-time street offences requiring police attention
- 47% reduction in assaults on 14 licensed premises requiring police attention

Also, in analyzing data from the four emergency departments in the Lower Hunter hospitals, Wiggins found that three years after the introduction of the conditions there was a 26 per cent reduction in night-time assault-related injury presentations to the hospitals.

Communities have tolerated without debate a culture of intoxication, ignoring the damage it causes. For such a debate to be constructive, it needs to be based on evidence. The debate in Newcastle has been helped by early independent evaluations of the conditions. Those evaluations showed startling reductions in the number of assaults in the order of 29% to 37% after the first 12 and 18 months. Source: Associate Professor John Wiggers, University of Newcastle

Wiggins' also conducted a survey of the community as community attitudes were an important consideration to the development of public policy and sought to assess the extent of community support for the conditions. In a survey of 376 randomly selected Lower Hunter household members, the research found;

- Up to 94% of community members were aware of the licensing conditions
- Up to 77% of community members supported the reduced trading hours conditions
- About 80% of community members supported the lock-out conditions and
- Up to 89% of community members supported the responsible service of alcohol conditions.

Wiggins' findings show that the initial reductions in alcohol-related harm have been maintained, that the benefits extend to reductions in anti-social behavior and emergency department presentations, and that there is a high level of community support for the licensing conditions.

We estimate that these initiatives have prevented well over 2,000 young people from being bashed on their streets at night in Newcastle.

²⁹ Kypri, K, Jones, c, McElduff, P & Barker, D (2011) Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian City, Addiction Research Report, doi:10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03125.x

The Australian Hotels Association Arguments

The AHA has in recent times attempted to deflect attention from the results of the Newcastle trial and put forward a number of smokescreens. They argue that:

- The issue is not availability of alcohol, but personal responsibility for its use,
- Hotels are being placed into receivership because of the restrictions,
- We should be looking to illicit drugs as a cause of violence around licensed venues rather than alcohol, or
- There should be more 'booze buses' available to take intoxicated patrons home.

These are easily countered:

- The NRA defense (guns don't kill people, people kill people) is facile – especially when it can be shown that there is a clear link between the availability of alcohol and the incidence of violent offences. When someone is affected by alcohol, personal responsibility is eroded and the defence becomes "I don't remember". After the event, remorse is common.
- Hotels and other venues that need to rely on trading after 3am are effectively saying that they place profit before public safety, that they are happy to serve alcohol to patrons who are already intoxicated. These venues should not be operating if they can only turn a profit between 3am and 5am. This is a matter of public interest that goes to the quality of life that citizens expect.
- The Newcastle evidence clearly shows that the link to violence is the availability of alcohol, not illicit drugs. A call for drug testing is a coarse attempt to deflect attention from the real issues. The AIHW (2005)³⁰ reported that Australians were almost twice as likely to be physically or verbally abused or intimidated by an alcohol-affected person, than by a person affected by other drugs. The authors reported that in 2004 almost a quarter of Australians aged 14 or older were verbally abused, 4.4% were physically abused and 13% were put in fear by a person affected by alcohol. In all, almost a third of Australians aged 14 and over had experienced an alcohol-related incident of this type. Interestingly, of those who experienced these incidents, 58.5% reported that they had not themselves been using alcohol (or other drugs) at the time of the incident. Also, among this group 90% did not report these incidents to police. Even when they experienced physical abuse, almost 72% did not report it to the police.
- Although transport is an issue (there is very little after 3am), booze buses after 3 am are closing the gate after the horse has bolted. There are stories of booze buses in the Northern Beaches of Sydney transporting patrons from one venue at closing time to another venue that has longer trading hours.

The way forward

According to the Campaign's report, doctors, nurses, ambulance officers and police are fearful of dealing with the effects of intoxicated patrons of licensed premises late at night and in the early hours of the morning. They have been abused, intimidated, threatened, assaulted and injured in the course of their duties. They attend to the seriously injured, are forced to struggle to restrain both male and female intoxicated violent offenders who are no longer in control of themselves and (in the case of police) are required to attend time consuming and resource intensive Court proceedings. Police members are also forced to have to remove vomit, urine and excrement from intoxicated persons and off themselves, their clothing, equipment, vehicles and holding areas.

³⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2005) 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Detailed findings. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

The Newcastle restrictions provide an evidenced base for the initiatives that reductions in alcohol related harms can be achieved to lessen the burden t placed on our emergency services workers. The Association does not wish to see responsible and law abiding hotels closed, nor prevent people from enjoying alcohol responsibly without causing undue disturbance to the neighbourhood . However, a relatively small reduction in trading hours (as in the Newcastle trial) and other modest measures does have a significant positive impact on the worst effects of alcohol fuelled violence and anti social behaviour and make life safer for both the police, other emergency and health workers, local residents and the public.

The public should be appalled that those frontline emergency services workers to whom they turn for assistance in genuine emergencies are spending so much time diverted to dealing with the impact of alcohol-fuelled violence. They should be dismayed at the amount of resources and tax dollars that are consumed in dealing with the effects of unrestricted access to alcohol. Doctors, nurses, ambulance officers and police pick up the pieces (often at cost to their own health) while hoteliers pocket the profits of the sale of alcohol. From Last Drinks campaign flyer

Tourism in Regional NSW and what it means for police

As mentioned a significant proportion of alcohol-related harm occurs in and around licensed premises. The police workload associated with responding to and managing alcohol-related crime, violence and disorder in or near licensed drinking environments as seen is high. The Standing Committee points out that it is vital that the tourism industry is operating as effectively as possible and is getting the support it needs to continue to foster and grow throughout the state. Policing in rural areas and the impact of tourism brings with it unique kinds of circumstances. Research has also shown that rates of alcohol-related harm are not uniformly spread among geographical regions. They appear to be higher in regional rather than metropolitan areas. For example, rural and regional areas have markedly higher levels of hospital admissions for alcohol-related assault than metropolitan areas. Some time ago, the Police Association conducted research into staff allocation in the northern region. The Northern region includes areas as the Northern Rivers, the Mid North Coast and the Hunter region which consist of a number of major urban areas, country regions, small country towns, rural and urban villages, large and small coastal resorts, beaches, farming towns, bush lands, coastal and forested areas, wetlands, tourism sectors and residential suburbs.

The Northern rivers region's population is increasing at a rate of about 1.6% per annum. The Northern Rivers is a key tourism destination, with the second highest level of international tourists in NSW. The region encompasses tourist icons such as Byron Bay and Nimbin. Tourism is an important part of the Mid North Coast region's economy. Visitors spent \$61.4 million on the Mid North Coast in 2009/10. The Central Coast also boasts a thriving tourism industry. It is host to over 4.5m visitors, 3.2m domestic overnight visitors and a total regional expenditure of \$762m. The Hunter also is one of Australia's economic powerhouses and one of Australia's largest regional populations. In 2009/10, there were 9.5 million visitors to the Hunter region – the highest of any NSW region. The Hunter's close proximity to Sydney and its broad range of tourism activities attracted 3.1 million domestic overnight visitors, 6.3 million domestic day trip visitors and 136,800 international visitors.

Tourism and Alcohol in the North

Tourist areas such as the above have a large number of “events” which require police stations to roster staff (in the case of a large event this would require a whole station be mobilized) from respective departments in order to handle these events. Such functions remove personnel from the station who would normally be answering calls for service. Also, another example of the dark side to high tourist flows is the fact that it brings with it (as mentioned) public concern about ‘alcohol-related crime’. Much of the youth violence is alcohol-related, with a lot occurring in and around pubs and nightclubs. Alcohol is an associated factor in a variety of crime types, including assaults, malicious damage, robbery, domestic violence and motor vehicle theft. In rural areas, there has been an increase in the number and type of licensed outlets thereby facilitating the increase in consumption of alcohol. Police members are concerned that the staffing levels will put officers at risk by dispatching them to high-crime areas or volatile situations without adequate backup.

Tweed/Byron Alcohol related violence

Some time ago the Association reported that the number one crime priority for police in the entire Tweed Byron Local Area Command was alcohol related violence in Byron Bay. Statistics recently released show that alcohol-related assault rates have skyrocketed, rising a staggering 20% since 2009/10. In the same period assaults on police have gone up by 25% - well above the NSW average. The number of alcohol related assaults is three times the state average. Byron Bay is the third most violent place in NSW, behind the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross. Saturday and Sunday mornings between 12am and 3am is when most of the damage is done – it’s then after drinkers have been plied with cheap shots and drinks, that they turn their attention to violence. Drunken violence has become so common in Byron Bay the local newspaper simply reports: “More drunken violence in Byron Bay”. In other words, it’s no shock to the locals. Byron Bay has a much bigger problem with alcohol-related crime than any of the towns that surround it. For instance, Coffs Harbour (a big tourist town on the north coast) had 284 alcohol-related assaults per 100 000 people in 2011. Nearby Ballina had 231; Tweed shire had 143; Byron Bay on the other hand had an staggering 787. Between January and October 2012, 105 of 115 alcohol-related assaults were linked to licensed premises and 70% of those assaults came from four venues. As a result of Byron Bay’s holiday town’s violent reputation, a group of residents have called for a major crackdown on the service of alcohol after midnight by forming the “Last Drinks at 12” group which has enlisted the help of Tony Brown, the architect of the “Newcastle Solution” that saw a 37% reduction in alcohol related assaults and a 50% reduction in night street crime when late trading hours were curbed to 3am in March 2008³¹.

"In Byron Bay, drunken brawls have become a constant feature of weekend nights. The CBD, which is just one street, has turned into a ghetto where drunken people wander up and down in gangs frequently confronting others and locals feel their town is taken over", Dr Graham Trustwell, local GP and member of Last Drinks at 12 group.

Police to Population ratio - research

Police are committed to providing the best possible service; however this is dependent on being able to physically put sworn officers where they are needed. There is a growing concern that this is now not possible simply because there are not enough police. Research indicates that jurisdictions that have increased their police to population ratios have shown notable reductions in crime. For example New

³¹ Jane Hansen, Last Drinks for Violence prone Byron, The Sunday Telegraph, August 18, 2013.

York City was arguably the safest large city in the United States with 5 sworn police officers for every 1000 citizens. Since 2005, New York has had the lowest crime rate among the 25 largest US cities. Violent crime in New York City decreased more than 75% from 1993 to 2005. New York experienced a record low homicide rate in 2012 and has a far lower murder rate than other major American cities. Similar reductions in crime have occurred in other jurisdictions where police numbers have increased. The NYPD's current uniformed strength is at 4 sworn police officers for every 1000 residents. Recent decreases in the NY police numbers have been accompanied by a subsequent rise in violent crime.

In New South Wales, increases in police numbers in the 1990s combined with improved policing practices did result in crime reduction in many areas. However with increased population and changing demographics, police have experienced a significant shift in both their workload and operational focus. Current day NSW Police provides services across one of the geographically largest police districts in the world – a single agency of only 16 176 officers protecting 7.21 million people, an increase of 636 300 people (10%) since June 2001. On a general scale, that's about one police officer for every 446 people in NSW. If one is to further break down the NSW numbers to per Local Area Command, the Northern region Local Area Command which currently stands at 1913 officers - this leaves one police officer for every 735 people. Compare this figure to New York City, with an estimated population of 8 336 367 and approximately 34 500 officer strength – that's about 1 police officer for every 241 residents and the staffing shortfall in the northern region becomes even more apparent. The NSW Police Force has been left so short on staff in the northern regional area that some of its most experienced investigators are left without staff to investigate serious crime and are returning to uniform duties instead to fulfill basic rostering requirements that are required to keep stations operating.

In addition to the Northern region's serious shortfall in police numbers is crime is increasing faster in regional areas compared to major metropolitan areas. Recently released statistics from BOCSAR show an annual percentage increase of 13.0% over the last 24 months in the Mid-North Coast for Violent Offences and 5.1% in the Hunter region whereas in Sydney it has remained stable.

The Coffs/Clarence Local Area Command is under-resourced to the point that it has recorded more than 14 000 overtime hours during the past two financial years. It is a similar story at the Richmond Command. The city of Grafton, which forms part of the Coffs/Clarence LAC has a population of 25 000 people. Its police station also serves a large surrounding area including towns such as Yamba that do not have a 24-hour police presence. The minimum shift staffing level to respond to public calls is five general duties officers. This provides one car crew, a station officer, custody officer and supervisor. But Grafton has been unable to fill that roster for many months. In turn, senior detectives have to fill the gap. This is not an isolated case.

Crime is on the rise from traditionally very safe locations such as Yamba and police in country NSW are left to service larger geographical areas on skeleton crews – unlike Sydney Local Area Commands with far greater resources at their disposal. It needs to be acknowledged that country commands are different to metropolitan and suburban commands. There is a current need to have sufficient numbers of police to service local country communities to prevent the growth of problems

Northern region Patrolling large geographic areas

To get a clearer picture of Northern police' coverage - the Northern region has an authorized strength of 1913 officers and provides services across approximately an area of 102 778 km². Central Metropolitan Region command provides services across an area of approximately 522.07km² with an authorized strength of 2345 police officers.

Northern Region

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011

Location	Area in km ²	Estimated Resident Population (2011)
Northern Rivers	20 732.6	277 284
Lord Howe Island	14.55	
Gosford	940	162 440
The Entrance		64 606
Wyang	44 017	
Mid North Coast		
Great Lakes	3376	34 430
Bellingen	1602	12 518
Port Macquarie-Hastings	3686.1	72 696
Nambucca	1491	18 644
Coffs Harbour	1175	68 413
Taree	3730	46 541
Kempsey	3380	28 134
Hunter		
Newcastle	187	620 530
Lake Macquarie	648	
Belmont	8.8	
Cessnock	1966	
Maitland	392	
Port Stephens	979	
Muswellbrook	3405	
Upper Hunter	8096	
Gloucester	2952	
Total	102 778.05	1 406 236

As depicted in the Tables above and below, the Northern Region Command has an estimated resident population of 1 406 236 – that's 1 police officer per 735 people. Compare this to Central Metropolitan Region and an estimated resident population of 917 286 that's 1 police officer per 391 people. These figures alone exhibit an extraordinary disparity and reflect the extra demands placed on northern regional police.

Central Metropolitan Region

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011

Location	Area in km ²	Estimated Resident Population (2011)
Botany Bay	26.75	39 356
City Central		
Sydney	3	14 308
Chippendale	0.7	4 057
Haymarket	0.4	5 376
Pymont	1	11 088
Ultimo	0.6	5 550
Leichardt	11	52 198
Eastern Suburbs	9	63 487

Miranda and Sutherland	335	210 863
Hurstville	23	
Allawah	2.6	5 367
Hurstville Grove		2 392
Connells Point		2 703
Carlton		9 808
Blakehurst	8.8	6 102
Eastern Beaches	36	128 989
Harbourside	10.9	62 289
RoseBay	12	52 158
St George	28	97 340
Kings Cross	1.4	20 000
Woolloomoolloo	0.5	3038
Newtown	1.6	13 550
Camperdown	1.5	7 886
Darlington	0.5	2 243
Enmore	0.4	3572
Erskenville	1.2	6848
St Peters	3.7	2601
Stanmore	1.2	7151
Sydenham		923
Tempe		3179
Redfern	1.2	11482
Alexandria	3.8	7050
Beaconsfield	0.2	906
Chippendale	0.7	4057
Rosebery	1.9	473
Waterloo	1.1	7428
Zetland	0.8	10657
Surry Hills	1.2	3812
Centennial	2.2	2106
Darlinghurst	0.8	10060
Paddington	1.5	11660
The Rocks	0.2	614
Dawes Point	0.1	544
Millers Point	0.5	2015
Total	537.17	917 286

The Northern Region command patrols an enormous area with a widely spread population. Coastal regions, such as Northern Rivers, the Mid North Coast and Central Coast all have experienced substantial population growth. As mentioned already, when you consider the example of New York City, the most densely populated major city in the United States with an estimated resident population of 8 336 697 distributed over a land of just 302.64 square miles (783.8 km²) and a police strength of 34 500 officers – that comes to about 1 officer per 241 residents – the lack of police numbers in the north becomes astoundingly apparent; Particularly as NY operates in a geographically tiny area with maximum opportunity to quickly mobilize resources to where they are needed. Members and delegates of the Association’s Biennial conference, repeatedly list strength as the number one issue facing police.

**Northern Region, Central Metropolitan Region' and New York City Police Department
Police Ratios Per Population**

Local Area Command (LAC) or Police Department	Area in km ²	Police Officers Per 1 Resident	Estimated Resident Population
Northern Region	102 7878.05	1 officer per 735 residents	1 406 236
Central Metropolitan Region	537.17	1 officer per 391 residents	917 286
New York City Department	783.8	1 officer per 241 residents	8 336 697

Another way to gauge the disparity in the extra demands placed on rural police as the northern police to that of their metropolitan cousins is to consider the composition of each of the region's Local Area Commands (LACs) and the number of Police Stations attached to these regions. The following Table indicates how many Police Stations and postal codes are attached to each of the Local Area Commands in the Northern region and the Central Metropolitan region.

Northern Region and Central Metropolitan Region' Local Area Commands and their Police Stations

Source: <http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/> as at June 2013

Local Area Command (LAC)	Police Stations in this LAC	This LAC also covers; (ie the number of postal codes assigned to this geographical area)
Northern Region (authorized strength 1913 officers)		
• Coffs/Clarence LAC	17	201
• Manning-Great Lakes LAC	7	172
• Mid North Coast LAC	14	178
• Richmond LAC	14	269
• Tweed-Byron LAC	7	132
• Hunter Valley LAC	12	161
• Lake Macquarie LAC	6	93
• Port Stephens LAC	8	88
• Newcastle City LAC	3	50
• Tuggerah Lakes LAC	3	78
• Central Hunter LAC	9	126
• Brisbane Water LAC	3	72
Total 12 Local Area Commands	103 Police Stations	1620 Postal Codes
Central Metropolitan Region (authorized strength 2345 officers)		
• Botany Bay LAC	2	10
• City Central LAC	2	5
• Eastern Beaches LAC	2	14
• Eastern Suburbs LAC	2	10
• Harbourside LAC	2	13
• Hurstville LAC	2	18
• Kings Cross LAC	2	5
• Leichardt LAC	2	10
• Miranda LAC	2	6
• Newtown LAC	1	9

• Redfern LAC	1	10
• Rose Bay LAC	2	11
• St George LAC	1	25
• Surry Hills LAC	1	6
• Sutherland LAC	3	31
• The Rocks LAC	1	5
Total	16 Local Area Commands	28 Police Station
		188 Postal Codes

As the Table indicates Northern Region police are required to service a larger geographical area of 1620 postal codes – this extraordinary number is in stark contrast to Central Regional police who are required to service just 188 postal codes.

Are there enough police across the Northern Region? The Northern region whose authorized strength stands at 1913 officers is required to physically put sworn officers in each of these 12 Local Area Commands as well as the 103 Police Stations attached to the respective LACs – this is in order to provide the day-to-day policing of local communities that citizens expect. This is in stark contrast to Central Metropolitan regional police whose strength stands at 2345 officers and are required to allocate their strength to just 16 Local Area Commands and 28 Police Stations. That is well under half (i.e. just 44 LACs and Police Stations) of Central Metropolitan police requirement to that of the Northern Region's requirement of 118 LACs and Police Stations.

Police also in the northern region encounter problems either unique to the rural setting or are complicated by the rural environment. Police are often faced with servicing remote and isolated households. Combined with fewer staff and without important resources, this factor can obviously impact on response time and the strength of that response.³² In regions such as the Northern region, the characteristics of rural populations, their living conditions and their problems differ significantly from urban areas. It is important to recognize and take into account a community's diversity. Factors such as location, community size, population heterogeneity and mobility, along with socio-economic change which effect crime and its reporting, all go to influencing the forms of policing that exist in regional districts such as the Northern district. The most striking contrast between the urban and rural operational environment is one of distance.

Alcohol issues do not fit into the scope of responsibility of any one agency. Police are called upon to address issues such as public drunkenness and assaults, but have no expertise or responsibility in health matters or social welfare. Nor are alcohol-related issues the core business of any one arm or level of Government. In these circumstances, it may be necessary for one Government department to take a lead agency role with respect to other departments. Source: Fitzgerald, 2001

Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing

Consequently, police spend a considerable proportion of their time dealing with alcohol-related offences. In order to reduce alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking environments, a range of collaborative strategies are required. Police alone do not possess the skills or resources

³² Pennings, James, Crime317 in Rural NSW: A Police Perspective, Paper presented at the Conference Crime in Rural Australia, University of New 1024England, Armidale, March 1999,

needed. Nor do they hold total responsibility for alcohol-related harm reduction associated with licensed drinking environments (Doherty, Roach 2003). Collaboration across and between levels of government, across agencies and within police organization is crucial. Research was conducted in April 2003 to develop a Monograph for police services across Australia that identified best practice strategies to reduce alcohol-related harms in and around licensed premises. The Monograph was produced through a grant from the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund (NDLERF) and undertaken by a consortium comprising of the National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, Queensland Police and South Australia Police. The Monograph involved extensive consultation and input from a wide range of key players including researchers and police officers in the field. It was developed specifically for operational police, their managers and policy makers. It was also intended to be a useful tool for those from the full range of other disciplines with an interest in the area.

The Monograph provides a comprehensive summary of issues addressed throughout the report and presents a set of recommendations to advance work in this area. It also provides a summary of five organisational factors (S.P.I.C.E.) that have been detailed throughout the Monograph as contributing to best practice in reducing alcohol-related harms in and around licensed drinking environments, as illustrated below. Some of their recommendations include the following;

- Develop a local coordinated approach for police to implement relevant sections of the National Alcohol Strategy Action Plan 2001 to 2003-04.
- Develop common evaluation procedures and a reporting protocol to record detail of policing strategies that aim to address alcohol-related problems associated with licensed drinking locations.
- Develop clear and specific key performance indicators for police agencies to report activities that aim to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.
- Develop a national database to identify the prevalence of alcohol incidents attended by, or reported to, police.
- Undertake research to identify the costs to police agencies in Australia of alcohol-related harms associated with licensed premises.
- Conduct further research into the patterns, locations and harms associated with youth drinking, especially in rural and remote areas.
- Conduct research to identify and examine initiatives that address Indigenous alcohol issues and develop guidelines to assist police to develop meaningful activities to address mutual needs.
- Conduct research to identify and examine whether infringement notice systems are valuable in reducing excessive alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harms.
- Conduct research to identify and examine the governance of liquor legislation by liquor authorities.
- Conduct research to identify knowledge of operational police of liquor laws and practices to effectively police licensed premises.
- set findings of research regarding the knowledge base of police officers to identify training needs and develop communication strategies to build motivation and capacity of operational police to effectively deal with problems in and around licensed premises.

There is promising evidence that certain enforcement strategies may be highly effective but there is often limited political and bureaucratic will to pursue these in many jurisdictions. Source: Stockwell, 1997a.

Understanding and responding to alcohol-related social harms in Australia

Another significant paper that the members of the Standing Committee would find relevant to its Tourism inquiry is a discussion paper prepared by Roger Nicholas of the National Drug Law Enforcement Research Fund regarding reducing the social harms (as distinct from the health harms) associated with alcohol consumption in which police play a prominent role. The social harms associated with alcohol consumption has not received the same level of research attention as have the health harms which the Association has been quite vocal about throughout its Last Drinks campaign. As mentioned, the responsibility for addressing many of these alcohol-related social harms falls to police. Briefly, the paper describes several domains of alcohol-related social harms. These include alcohol;

- Attributable crime;
- Attributable road trauma;
- Related assaults and other violence;
- Related family violence; and
- Related reductions in public perceptions of safety.

The evidence discussed in the paper indicates that social harms associated with alcohol consumption across all these domains are very substantial indeed. Measures aimed at restricting the availability of alcohol with a view to reducing the associated social harms, can be divided into two groups. These are measures which affect:

- The physical availability of alcohol, which relates to the ease with which individuals can obtain or come into contact with alcohol in their local environments, or
- The economic availability of alcohol, which refers to the price of alcohol in relation to the disposable income of drinkers.

The paper draws together the findings about the extent and nature of social harms associated with alcohol consumption and the findings about what the evidence suggests are most likely to be effective strategies. Some of these include;

- Ensuring that appropriate liquor licensing legislation is in place and enhancing the enforcement of this legislation
- The establishment of a national mechanism to focus on liquor licensing law enforcement issues
- Controlled test purchasing of alcohol and strategies to address secondary supply of alcohol to minors
- Ensuring that policing efforts aimed at reducing problems associated with licensed premises are appropriately focused
- Up-skilling operational police in the policing of licensed premises and creating centralised areas of expertise
- Monitoring the trends in the proliferation of vertical drinking establishments and their impact on alcohol-related crime
- Ensuring that alcohol-related issues are included in corporate strategic planning issues
- Supplementing the existing national Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative (IDDI) to include alcohol
- Supporting an examination of approaches to alcohol taxation in Australia, including the potential for a hypothecated tax to reduce the social and other harms associated with alcohol consumption
- A systemic examination of the impediments to police agencies enforcing liquor licensing legislation
- Research to better understand the role of crowd controllers in reducing the social harms associated with licensed premises

Again, many of these measures have long been espoused by the Police Association in its Last Drinks campaign because of their proven success. Police have primary carriage of dealing with many of the alcohol-related social harms and need to be supported in their request for measures that have proven to work (such as the scheme in Newcastle) and in being able to effectively intervene in many of these harms.

Why do Staff at licensed premises continue to Serve Patrons to intoxication despite current laws and interventions? Final Report

Another report relevant to the Standing Committee's Tourism Inquiry is published by the Injury Control council of Western Australia (ICCWA) which examined why staff at licensed premises continue to serve patrons to intoxication despite current laws and interventions. The report specifically aimed to gain an understanding of what motivates staff at licensed premises to continue to serve patrons to intoxication and what deters them from providing intoxicated patrons with further service.

Licensed premises are prime sites for intoxication and violence between (typically) young males. Precisely because of the predictability of violence in these locations they offer an opportunity for violence prevention. Source: Indermaur, 1999.

A review of the available literature relating to service of alcohol to intoxicated patrons was carried out. In summary, much of the literature identifies a number of factors that are significant incentives for staff to continue service to intoxicated patrons. One of the most significant factors is the server's perception of confrontation with the patron (Reiling & Nusbaumer 2006; Turrisi, Nicholson & Jaccard 1999). Other factors such as a loss of gratuity for the server and reduced profits for the venue have also been reported to play a role in influencing serving practices (Lang et al. 1998; McKnight & Streff 1993; Reiling & Nusbaumer 2006). In respect to civil liability, Reiling and Nusbaumer (2006) found that the risks associated with fine enforcement have little impact on compliance with serving laws if servers encountered intoxicated patrons frequently.

Strategies and recommendations to address barriers to serving alcohol responsibly have been identified and include:

- review of the elements of RSA training—specifically around identifying intoxication and or drunkenness, acceptability of intoxication and how to effectively manage intoxicated patrons;
- tailored in-house training for individual venues such as Safer Bars (Graham et al. 2004) which incorporate harm reduction, violence prevention plans and address commonly held views of acceptability of drunkenness and intoxication; and
- progressive planning to recognise and accredit licensed premises that promote and practise alcohol-related harm reduction strategies³³

An imperative point the report makes is that there are indications that nationally, Australians want to see a reduction in alcohol-related harm and violence. Results of a 2007 survey by Of Substance magazine showed that four out of five people (85%) were concerned about alcohol in relation to public safety (Tinworth 2008). According to Wilson (2009), almost 80 percent of adult Australians acknowledge a national drinking problem. The point must be made, however, that collaborative and persistent

³³ Injury Control council of Western Australia (Inc), Drink or drunk: Why do Staff at Licensed premises continue to Serve Patrons to intoxication despite current laws and interventions? Final Report, Monograph Series No 38, NDLERF, 2011.

approaches by a number of different stakeholders are necessary to support change. No one group or intervention can succeed in isolation.³⁴

Patron Offending and Intoxication in Night-Time Entertainment Districts

This research was a massive project which interviewed almost 7000 patrons between November 2011 to June 2012 and conducted almost 900 hours of hours of observation of patrons in pubs and clubs. The project showed that across Australia, after 1am, almost 30% of 6500 patrons tested had a blood alcohol content of above 0.1. An average of 65% reported pre-drinking (or pre-loading) before to going out and the main reason to pre-load was to save money. Consuming five or six drinks before going to the pub indicated a higher risk of heavy alcohol consumption and risky behavior such as drink driving. The study also showed a high propensity for the use of high energy drinks (HED) – either in an alcohol mix or separate, and HED users generally had a higher BAC reading and experienced more aggression and injury. Most HED users had, on average, exceeded the daily recommended dose by 11pm. Finally, around one in four people are believed to have used drugs. This study was the first of its kind to use drug swabs to validate people own reports. It found between 1 and 2 people in every five had used drugs, but that one in four was the most likely average across the country. Suggested policy directions from the study include:

- alcohol companies pay for health warning TV advertisements directly after the screening of pro-alcohol ads;
- ceasing the sales of high energy drinks from 10pm;
- the imposition of tighter trading hour restrictions;
- ceasing the sale of alcohol in venues an hour before closing;
- increasing the price of alcohol through taxation(preferably based on volume and increasing according to beverage strength) to include pre-packaged alcohol used for preloading, to allow for specific expenditure on measure that ameliorate harm, and;
- the banning of two for one, and bulk discount of alcohol deals.

If Australia could become a nation of low risk drinkers instead of a nation of high risk drinkers a great number of injuries, illnesses and deaths could be prevented. Source: National Drug Research Institute, 2002

NSW/ACT Alcohol Policy Alliance (NAAPA)

In December 2012, a newly formed coalition of health, community, law enforcement, emergency services and research organizations has been formed with the objective of promoting evidence based solutions and actions to inform, reduce and prevent acute and chronic alcohol-related harms in NSW and ACT. NAAPA currently has 31 member organizations and includes among its members the Australian Medical Association (NSW), Police Association of NSW, the Cancer Council and the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE). According to NAAPA's policy priorities, effective interventions to reduce alcohol-related harms need to consider the range of harms that result from alcohol consumption, the various patterns of drinking and the environment in which alcohol is consumed. Policies also need to consider the impacts of both on-license (bars and clubs), as well as off-license (retailers and take-away outlets) premises. The ways that alcohol is sold, promoted and made available all contribute to the way that alcohol is consumed and the associated harms. Across Australia

³⁴ Injury Control council of Western Australia (Inc), Drink or drunk: Why do Staff at Licensed premises continue to Serve Patrons to intoxication despite current laws and interventions? Final Report, Monograph Series No 38, NDLERF, 2011

today alcohol is the most affordable that it has been in over three decades, it is more available than it ever has been and it is more heavily promoted.

State and territory governments have the opportunity to reduce alcohol-related harms because they are responsible for the development and enforcement of liquor licensing legislation, which controls the number and types of liquor licenses available in each jurisdiction, as well as the way that alcohol is promoted. They also determine the extent to which the community is able to influence the number and type of licensed premises in their local areas and the accountability of liquor licensees. State and territory governments are also responsible for the provision of a range of services relating to the consumption of alcohol including school and community education, enforcement, compliance, policing, healthcare provision and alcohol and drug services. NAAPA's policy priorities are focused on three areas where the NSW and ACT Governments can have the greatest influence in reducing alcohol-related harms. These are:

- Alcohol availability;
- Alcohol pricing and promotion; and
- Community engagement.

Relevant to the Standing Committee's inquiry into tourism, NAAPA's policy action requirements have included the following;

- Establish and enforce 'saturation zones' which impose limitations on the provision of new licenses in areas that are identified as already having large numbers of licensed premises.
- Introduce 'cumulative impact' and 'cluster control' policies which prohibit new licenses from being granted within a specified distance of existing licensed premises.
- Introduce a 3am common closing time and 1am lock out for all pubs and clubs across NSW and the ACT.
- Impose a moratorium that prevents trading after midnight for new liquor licenses and existing licenses seeking extensions.
- Prohibit the harmful discounting and promotion of alcohol products at on-license and off-license premises, and ensures these measures are enforced.
- Prohibit the sale of shots, mixed drinks with more than 30mL of alcohol and ready mixed drinks stronger than five per cent alcohol by volume after 10pm.
- Prohibit the sale of more than four drinks to any person at one time and implement and enforce a requirement to provide free water stations at every licensed premise.
- Prohibit the sale of alcohol mixed with energy drinks after midnight.
- Provide greater opportunities for people to engage with consultation processes for new liquor licenses or variations of licenses.
- Establish a service to support people and organizations that wish to raise concerns regarding new liquor licenses or changes to licenses.
- Develop effective public education campaigns to raise awareness of the risks associated with alcohol consumption, ways to avoid these risks and the liquor licensing laws.

Research suggests that an increase in the availability of alcohol leads to higher alcohol consumption and corresponding increase in alcohol related harm. In contrast, decreases in alcohol availability result in lower consumption and reductions in harm From ADCA, Inquiry into the Provision of Alcohol to Minors, August 2012.

Working with Hotels and Clubs to Reduce Alcohol-related Crime, NSW Police Force, NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Auditor-General's Report Performance Audit

Both the NSW Police Force and NSW Office of Liquor Gaming and Racing (OLGR) regulate the liquor industry and work with licensees to minimize the harm caused by alcohol. This report explores how well they are working together and highlights some of the challenges they face in tackling this complex social issue. As mentioned, alcohol misuse has a significant impact on the community. It costs millions of dollars each day through lost labor, crime and health care. Alcohol misuse is closely linked to crime and anti-social behavior. Excluding domestic violence incidents, almost one third of alcohol-related assaults occur on licensed premises such as hotels and clubs. According to the Auditor General's Report, there are three main ways to reduce alcohol-related crime on or near licensed premises. These are:

- Preventing patrons from reaching undesirable levels of intoxication, through the responsible service of alcohol (RSA)
- Introducing strategies that reduce the opportunity for crime such as extra transport at peak times and when premises close
- Responding to incidents after they occur to prevent them from escalating and to deal with offenders.

It is difficult to determine what works best to reduce alcohol-related crime. A key role is to ensure compliance with the liquor laws, including the Liquor Act 1982 (the Act). A key objective of the Act is harm minimisation. This refers to harm associated with alcohol misuse, such as violence and other anti-social behaviour. The Government recently reformed the State's liquor laws. Some of the key reforms include:

- the Licensing Court to be replaced with an administrative-based system
- the responsibilities of the Licensing Court and Liquor Administration Board to be transferred to a new authority
- expanded powers of the Director of Liquor Gaming and Racing such as imposing and varying licence conditions.

OLGR and Police must work with licensees to promote RSA and harm minimisation. Without this there will be limited impact on levels of intoxication which increases the risk of alcohol-related crime. The Audit found that both agencies assist and support licensees to meet RSA requirements. OLGR provides licensee self-assessments, runs workshops, and presents at liquor accords meetings, which are formal partnerships with licensees. Police also use liquor accords to discuss licensing issues, however they tend to educate mainly through enforcement. For example, police may discuss intoxication and RSA with licensees when responding to incidents or inspecting licensed premises. The Audit made a number of recommendations designed to improve how Police and OLGR work with licensees to reduce alcohol-related crime. These included:

- developing a standard approach to enforcing the liquor laws
- delivering patron education campaigns
- removing barriers to working with licensees
- better guidance on how police should deal with breaches, and assist and support licensees on RSA
- better training for general duty police.³⁵

³⁵ Auditor-General's Report Performance Audit, Working with hotels and clubs to reduce alcohol-related crime, NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, NSW Police Force, April 2008

Sydney's Kings Cross has long been known as a hotspot for alcohol-related violence, but the recent tragic death of teenager Thomas Kelly has really thrown the area's issues into the public spotlight. Kings Cross is certainly not alone – alcohol-related violence is an issue right across the state and the country – but the recent tragedy has highlighted just how serious the issue is in the Cross, and how strong the community push to something to fix it is. The focus now needs to be on how we put measure in place to minimize the chances of something like this happening again. From Police News, September 2012

The Avoidable Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Australia

In 2008 the Australian Government commissioned a study titled, “The Avoidable Costs of Alcohol Abuse in Australia and the Potential Benefits of Effective Policies to Reduce the Social Costs of Alcohol”. This study identifies the interventions for which strong Australian or international evidence exists as to their potential benefits, and attempts to value these benefits in terms of the reduction in the social costs of alcohol abuse which it would be possible to achieve. In addition, a range of interventions is identified which the research literature has demonstrated to be effective but for which it did not prove possible to value the potential benefits. Interventions identified as being effective and whose benefits are quantifiable are:

- higher alcohol taxation, including differential tax rates on forms of alcohol which are particularly subject to abuse;
- partial or complete bans on the advertising and promotion of alcohol;
- measures to reduce drink driving—more intensive enforcement of random breath testing and lowering the legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level; and
- brief interventions by primary care physicians to reduce hazardous alcohol consumption.

Further interventions identified as being effective, but whose benefits could not be valued, were:

- control of drinking environments;
- alcohol ignition locks on vehicles driven by convicted drink-driving offenders;
- guidelines for low risk drinking; and
- standard drinks labeling and health warnings on drinks containers.

The objective of the present study is not to recommend the adoption of a particular set of alcohol policies. It is to consider from an economic perspective a range of policies which have been shown to be effective and to indicate, as far as the data allow, the economic benefits likely to flow from the implementation of these policies. The study is intended to assist in the development of evidence-based strategies for the reduction in the social costs of alcohol abuse in Australia.

...Australia can shift towards a healthier and more sustainable drinking culture, one that does not forgo the enjoyment of safe, sensible and social drinking. A multi-pronged prevention strategy that includes a complementary set of actions is required to support this cultural shift, using economic levers such as taxation, legislative and regulatory measures, policing and law enforcement approaches, boosting support for local communities and individuals as well as increasing awareness and shifting attitudes in the general community.

Comparing Regulatory and Planning Models which Reduce Crime in the Night Time Economy, Suzie Matthews Report

A comparative study conducted by Suzie Matthews is another valuable piece of research relevant to the Tourism Inquiry in which Matthews looks at the legislative, policy, regulatory and precinct management systems used in large, complex global cities to manage the night time economy, and to which have had some measure of success in balancing these competing priorities. Matthews report provides specific information regarding closing times in other countries and particularly in terms of countering the notion that to attract tourists we have to have a 24/7 trading environment. The cities studied include; Vancouver, Canada; New York, USA; London and Cardiff, UK; Manchester, UK; Edinburgh, Scotland; Paris, France; Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Berlin, Germany. As Matthews states, striking the right balance between a vibrant night time economy and amenity and safety is a challenge facing many of these cities. A comparative table of all the cities is provided in the report as well as a comprehensive listing of recommendations of which include the following;

Legislation

- Consideration of cluster control provisions for licensed premises and late night take away food premises within both liquor licensing and environmental planning legislative frameworks.
- Consideration of “saturation zone” provisions within liquor legislation to enable a localized veto of further growth in late night licensed and take away food premises in specific areas.
- Consideration of “late night levy” legislation which would be applied to all premises operating after 12am to contribute to the additional cost of servicing a late night economy.
- Creation of a licensing permit system where renewal of liquor licenses occurs after a three year period.
- Consideration of legislation relating to the use of Identity Scanners in licensed premises, with provisions referring to type of data to be collected, data storage and sharing, use of data, length that data can be stored.

Precinct Management

- Consideration of integrated precinct dispersal plans to ensure cleansing, lighting and transportation are all effectively and efficiently coordinated to get people home at the end of the night.
- Consideration of an integrated night time city map, containing transport info, maps, nightlife destinations and emergency contacts.
- Consider options for Council licensing compliance officers, Rangers & CCTV operators to meet with local police on Friday nights regarding weekend tasking’s and key issues to be addressed in key late night precincts.

Industry Led Initiatives

- Consider “venue dispersal guideline” outlining how the venue will close and how patrons will get home safely and with minimal impact on amenity at night.
- Consideration of liquor accord members funding enhanced roaming security to monitor problematic patrons and work in with police to better manage public areas.
- Consideration of a no queue policy after 1 am, with all venues participating³⁶.

Matthews affirms the fact global cities undertake a range of activities to manage their existing night time economies. Many of these actions have had significant impacts on levels of alcohol related crime. No initiative on its own though appears to reduce crime levels, but rather it was a combination of measures working together which were most effective. These measures include;

³⁶ Suzie Matthews, The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia, City of Sydney Council, 2009.

Shorter trading hours

International and Australian evidence suggests a clear link between terminal trading hours and levels of alcohol related violence. Trading hours for licensed premises are determined via the respective licensing legislation. Many cities visited as part of the research promoted themselves as “the city that never sleeps” or a “24 hour city”, when this was not necessarily the case when it came to licensed premises. Those cities with earlier trading hours tended to have lower levels of alcohol related crime.

Many Australian cities now allow longer trading hours than many other international cities, such as New York (where licensed venues close at 4am), Vancouver (3am), London (5am), Edinburgh (4am), Paris (breaks between 2am and 7am) and Amsterdam (5am). Critics may argue (Streker, 2012) that people will continue drinking alcohol at home after they leave these venues. However, even if this is true, they will not be exposed to the dangers inherent in large crowds of intoxicated strangers and are more likely to have better access to shelter, warmth and toilets³⁷.

Outlet density measures - saturation zones

Outlet density is strongly associated with increased levels of alcohol related violence. Measures which assist cities to stop growth in certain areas appear to be effective. Policy makers, police and academics interviewed tended to support a more dispersed (rather than concentrated) night time economy. The City of Westminster has had a visible effect on outlet density through the introduction of a saturation policy, and other cities, such as Paris and Vancouver have had success in increasing the dispersal of licensed premises via cluster controls.

Precinct dispersal

The cities which recovered best from the night before were those with integrated late night transport, cleansing, policing, secure precinct dispersal strategies. Edinburgh was particularly good at getting people home and the city clean after busy weekend nights, and Amsterdam has some particularly innovative approaches.

Strong compliance and the willingness to enforce legislation were crucial in managing licensed premises in the night time economy.

This required good coordination between key agencies, and once again Edinburgh demonstrated initiative by inviting council officers to police briefings on weekends.

Improving the economic diversity and cultural offering is a long term goal for several of the cities visited

Most are however in very early stages, and currently support longer opening hours for public cultural institutions (ie: London’s Tate Galleries).

An active and engaged industry

The UK industry body NOCTIS has taken leadership on dispersal policies for venues, and Bar Watch in Vancouver has improved the role of industry in reducing alcohol related violence on the streets near venues.

³⁷ Dr Peter Streker, Under the Influence: What local governments can do to reduce drug and alcohol related harms in their communities, Prevention Research Quarterly, Number 19, October 2012.

Visible police presence

Cities with large numbers of visible police on the street at night (ie: New York), not only appeared to have lower crime levels, but also felt safer.

The comparative table of all the cities that Matthews refers to in her findings is provided below;

Comaparative City Table						
City	Legal Drinking Age	National Alcohol Consumption	Terminal Trading Hour	Length of Liquor Licence Permit	Cluster Control Provisions	Saturation Policy/Sensitive Zones/Moratoriums
Vancouver	19 years	7.8 litres	2am/3am	1 year, then must be renewed	Yes Planning Controls	Yes Planning Controls
New York	21 years	8.6 litres	4am	2 years, then must be renewed	Yes Liquor Legislation	No
London	18 years	11.8 litres	4am/5am Some 24 hour licences	Issued permanently	No	Yes Liquor Legislation
Manchester	18 years	11.8 litres	5am/7am Some 24 hour licences	Issued permanently	No	No, but capacity to create one exists within the Licensing Act 2003
Edinburgh	18 years	11.8 litres	3/4am	1 year, then must be renewed	No	Yes Planning Controls
Paris	16 years (for beer or wine)	11.4 litres	2am/7am for nightclubs	Issued permanently No	Yes Liquor Legislation	No
Amsterdam	16 years	8.0 litres	5am	1 year, then must be renewed Yes	No	Yes Property availability creates an effective ban
Berlin	16 years (for beer or wine)	12.0 litres	No terminal hour Must close 5am-6am	Issued Permanently	No	No
Sydney	18 years	9.0 litres	Varie 12am, 3am, 5am Some 24 hour licences	Issued Permanently	No	A temporary freezes on liquor licenses – June 2009 – July 2011

Concluding Comments

Alcohol is a prominent feature in Australian society and because of its place as a dominant social role in Australia it has resulted in the proliferation of licensed drinking venues. In addition to the traditional corner pub, entertainment strips consisting of a high volume of licensed venues are a common feature of the Australian drinking scene. There are over nine thousand licensed premises and licensed clubs in Australia with NSW possessing the largest number of licensed premises. The extent of locations in which public drinking occurs does not just span to licensed premises it also encompasses special events such as open air concerts, wine and beer festivals, motor racing and other sporting events to name but a few. Safety, social disruption and violence in and around these entertainment environs are areas of growing concern in communities. Continuous patterns of violence in such locations have been found to be related to local situational variables such as management practices, government legislation, regulation and enforcement³⁸. Alcohol remains a significant contributor to patron offending and intoxication. Pre-drinking, energy drink use and illicit drug use all contribute significantly to such harms and offending behaviours, however basic levels of intoxication and pre-drinking remain the major predictors of offending and harm. Police spend a considerable proportion of their time dealing with alcohol-related offences. Significant proportions of alcohol-related harm occur in and around licensed premises and many of these problems are related to the way in which licensees conduct their business. Licensed drinking environments require diligent attention from law enforcement agencies³⁹. NSW policing agencies have primary carriage of dealing with many of the alcohol-related social harms present

³⁸ Doherty, S, Roche, M, A, Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing, A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers, April 2003

³⁹ Doherty, S, Roche, M, A, Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing, A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers, April 2003.

in today's society. They are also well placed to intervene in many of these harms (ie through enforcement of a number of liquor laws) but they need to be supported in operational numbers and their resources bolstered to achieve progress and implement positive results in licensed venues and their environs. Drunken violence needs to be curbed and as evident from the Association's submission there is a plethora of collaborative strategies and interventions available to be imposed in venues and party districts alike to assist in regulating licensed venues and reducing alcohol-fuelled assaults. These recommendations are mostly focused on 3 areas where the Government can have the greatest influence in reducing alcohol-related harm ie Alcohol availability; Alcohol pricing and promotion; and community engagement. Police have been successful partners in collaborative responses. Collaboration across and between levels of government, across agencies ie licensed venue operators and staff, police, liquor authorities, local government and local business is crucial. All of these stakeholders are capable of operating in a way that can reduce the likelihood and severity of alcohol-related harm. Enforcement is a key element of best practice in policing licensed premises⁴⁰. The Government needs to focus on measures in dealing with alcohol-related issues at the source, rather than on measures in dealing with the aftermath. Proven measures such as the scheme in Newcastle which introduced reduced trading hours, lock-outs and restrictions on high-content drinks have proven to decrease alcohol-fuelled violence by a staggering 37 percent. Success lies in these collaborative strategies and the increasingly good evidence and proven interventions which can and have led to promoting and fostering a progressively sustainable and responsible level of tourism within NSW.

⁴⁰ Doherty, S, Roche, M, A, Alcohol and Licensed Premises: Best Practice in Policing, A Monograph for Police and Policy Makers, April 2003

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