

**Submission
No 131**

**INQUIRY INTO THE MUSIC AND ARTS ECONOMY IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Ms Georgina Reed

Date received: 21 February 2018

SUBMISSION

To: The NSW Parliament Inquiry into the Music and Arts Economy

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By: Georgina Reed
Community Radio presenter.

Since 1989 I have been a volunteer community radio broadcaster in Sydney, Australia. Beginning at 2RDJ FM in Burwood, in 1991 I also joined 2NSB FM91.5 (which changed the call sign to FM99.3 in 2000). For approx. 2 years during the 90's I was also an announcer at Eastside Radio 89.7. I have been presenting weekly music programs continuously since 1989.

On all three stations my programs have included jazz, blues, soul, funk, reggae, Latin and world music and their sub-genres, by both Australian and international artists, as I saw these areas of music were sadly under-represented on Australian radio.

I love presenting music that is rarely heard on commercial radio, which serves not just to entertain, but to educate our listeners and because we stream live, a lot of Australian music is being heard around the world which would never have happened without community radio.

In the late 80's when I first began broadcasting, very few Australian artists played or recorded the above styles of music so it was a challenge to include Australian content in these genres. Thankfully, over the years more and more musicians have produced recordings that I am proud to play for our burgeoning audience. I note with joy that many of our artists are on a par, if not superior to international artists, and deserve more and better recognition than they currently received, most notably on commercial radio.

In the 80's and 90's there was a vibrant live music scene in Sydney with a plethora venues where many local artist played and many touring artists performed (both national and international). Back then commercial radio supported Australian artists extremely well, but predominantly just the rock and pop genres, leaving jazz, blues and the rest languishing in the shadows.

I have sought to redress that issue with my small contribution, and as community radio stations receive no Government assistance they must survive under their own auspices. This is another subject that deserves a separate submission of its own.

Unfortunately the draconian, knee-jerk lock-out laws have all but decimated the live music scene in the Kings Cross area, and we now hear that multi story units will be built by multi-national corporations in that precinct. The greed factor has infiltrated and infected so much of Sydney, if allowed to continue, it will kill the already frail creative music sector. History reveals what happens when artistic creativity and expression is denied and it's not a pretty sight.

Recently, a number of venues in Marrickville have become popular with a lot of live music shifting to that area. Music lovers have been very supportive, with many travelling from the north side and other areas to enjoy the live music entertainment in the precinct.

At a recent Council Meeting submissions were heard from many in the live music industry regarding the proposed creation of a live music hub in Marrickville. Unfortunately after 3 years of hard work by John Wardle* (musician) and others, the proposal was voted down by Council. This means another lost opportunity for a vibrant and creative music and artistic hub to be created in this would-be dynamic inner suburb of Sydney.

I believe your inquiry needs to openly address issues such as the Marrickville Music Hub proposal, why it failed, and who gains from what will now happen to Marrickville (e.g. more high rise apartments to completely destroy the ambience of the area?).

I sincerely hope that your inquiry acknowledges the large number of community radio stations that support local music and musicians, distinct from commercial radio stations who don't seem to care much about our local (non pop/rock music) industry.

It would benefit both our local musicians and the radio listeners if more were done to assist both the community stations and the volunteers who run them. They give their time and talent freely to keep these stations on air, and the Government would do well to help with much needed publicity and financial support, or at the very least offer some assistance with upgrading outdated equipment and facilities.

I will continue to present my weekly music shows, which always include at least 5% and often up to 50% Australian music content. Commercial radio doesn't even come close, yet they are permitted to broadcast at much higher levels giving them much better signals than community radio.

Music is an intrinsic part of every culture, yet our Government has seen fit to ignore certain genres. Classical music and opera receive a lot of support yet jazz, blues and other music styles are not similarly supported. Why not?

Provide the music and the audience will appear. If we work together to promote the local live music industry everyone will benefit and it will become a win/win situation.

** In recent years, John Wardle (among others) was instrumental in having the POPE entertainment licence requirements dismantled, which then allowed venue, café and restaurant owners to apply for a licence to present live music in their premises without the previously prohibitive fees (that had been introduced after lobbying by the AHA). This has helped to restore our decimated live music industry somewhat, but much more is required to educate the public and bring live music back into the pubs, clubs and suburbs.*