

**Submission
No 220**

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

Name: Ms Meryllyn Steele

Date received: 26 February 2018

NSW PARLIAMENT

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a professional working musician and private music teacher in Sydney. I have been working in this industry professionally for over 25 years. Definition of 'work' being paid performances in clubs, hotels, cruises, restaurants, cabaret, festivals and so on.

I quit middle management corporate office jobs to pursue my passion for music full time, but it certainly does not match the pay packet!

I find as a musician and artist we are often treated as the lowest of the low. We are the last to be paid down the line of bookers, venues, agents etc and some even have the notion that we are lucky to be paid at all.

If we do get paid, sometimes the wait can be up to 2 to 3 months or more! Some agents know they can get away with not paying at all as the artist will give up trying to get their money. I know of some who are owed thousands from some agents which they have given up on ever getting.

There is no regulation to make agents or venues pay artists for performances. There needs to be a policy in place and to somehow make it compulsory like a union for any other industry.

Furthermore, the price per performance for many venues has not risen in some for over 10 - 20years! This does not even keep up with CPI and the cost of living.

I fear that with the rising cost of living I will not be able to afford maintaining this profession but have been out of the 'normal' workforce so long probably cannot re enter and age is against me.

So in brief, the things I think where we need MOST change for working musicians/artists are;

1. A proper union or regulation that will represent artists for pay issues and conditions of work
2. An enforceable minimum wage per hour for performers in general clubs, hotels etc who make millions on poker machine profits
3. More Govt grants to foster talent and encourage new artists
4. Grants to help working artists record, tour and promote new original music

Feel free to contact me regarding any of these matters or issues.

Regards,

Merilyn Steele