

**Submission
No 293**

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

Name: Mr Shaun Evans

Date received: 27 February 2018

To the New South Wales Parliament,

In regards to Inquiry into The Music and Arts Economy in New South Wales,

My name is Shaun Evans and only recently have I become a resident of New South Wales. I am a Project Administrator for a contractor working on the Newcastle Light Rail, I am working towards my third Diploma and I am also a musician of over 10 years. Through my decade in music, I have come to play guitar, bass, drums, piano and vocals whilst previously working as a guitar teacher, a member of a live stage crew and a professional performing musician.

Brisbane born and raised, I found enormous variety in a range of the arts throughout areas south as South Bank, West End and most notably, the Fortitude Valley. It is in these areas that I found hope for the music and the arts industries is not gathered from the policies of the government – this is a sentiment shared across a wide demographic. Hope for the industry is found in individuals whose passion is keeping it alive. Take Scott Hutchinson, of Hutchinson Builders for example. He is a patron of QMusic whose company purchased a \$23 million dollar Brisbane venue primed for a revitalisation purely for the arts industry. He has also teamed with famous Brisbane musicians to develop another Hutchinson property into what is now one of Brisbane's best music venues, The Triffid. This is what gives me hope for my industry.

Artists and musicians are driven, passionate, powerful individuals who won't be stopped if they are truly passionate about their craft. The primary thing we need are venues to play in. Venues without the fear of being overrun by the local area's development. Venues who don't have to cut the sound to a show because of a compliant, by a resident.... living in an apartment in the CBD. In my opinion, the main thing the government needs to focus on is protecting and developing the platforms we rely on.

I think the below would be great steps in the right direction.

- Establishing protection for venues with significant contemporary music or artist contributions, throughout metropolitan and regional areas alike. Throughout Sydney and Melbourne for example are long lists of venues that have catered for the arts industries who are now shutting their doors. These are ripe for property development, gentrification and ultimately, artistic dissolution. Legislation that looks to protect both history and contemporary venues on the basis of providing artistic cultural significance would go along way to preserving the contribution these venues make towards art and music regardless of the change of local planning or social influence.

- Through the investigation and implementation of dedicated entertainment precinct zoning, similar to the zoning used in the Fortitude Valley in Brisbane, through major towns and cities along the New South Wales coast. The designation of certain commercial areas to allow for amplified noise to an industry standard can act as a safeguard, not just for the venues within these zones, but for the musicians relying on those venues.

In addition to supporting localised venues, bands/acts/artists located either within New South Wales or traveling from interstate will be able to create clear paths for touring and extended performing to towns and cities with designated entertainment precincts, increasing the feasibility of actually organising shows and carrying out tours. For example, these precincts could be introduced, if not already, into Byron Bay, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong.

- Modifying the trading licences for venues offering live music, especially within regional areas. Exemptions for venues who provide live music or live performance, extended licenced opening hours, increased timeframes for amplified sound. Create the incentive to organise, offer and promote live music rather than replace their stages with Pokies and close their doors before anywhere else in the world.

What I envision is a strategy that protects historical and contemporary venues that cater for art and provide live entertainment. A strategy that looks to link multiple cities and towns for creative distribution, promoting the industry. A strategy that incentivises going against the Australian trend of replacing entertainment with gambling. Ultimately, I long for a strategy that supports youth creativity and artistic and musical expression, instead of forcing their venues out of business, turning down their speakers and sending them off to bed.

As a musician, the idea of protected areas promoting artistic expression trumps anything. In addition to playing music, I have experience in project management and business administration as well as experience developing websites. If there is anything I can personally do to help achieve any steps to protect music and the arts – please... please call or email me with the details below.

Kind regards,

Shaun Evans.