

Submission
No 277

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
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The NSW Parliament inquiry into music in NSW Submission

INDUSTRY: Productive enterprise. In order to be productive, there needs to be a fair, balanced and supported structure that promotes economic / employment / social / health / education /crime prevention & reduction growth. When nurtured, supported and respectfully promoted, this is what the music industry contributes to.

As a strong state and country, it is disheartening to see the negative impact on business, artists and the community as a whole from what should be a thriving industry and culture, that continues to go backwards. Instead of venues closing, people losing jobs, artists not getting fair play or pay, we should be growing with more jobs and opportunities in 2018.

Music is a global culture and plays an (often) unappreciated role in our lives from early development, social engagement, therapy, education, recreation/fitness, silence breaker and enterprise. However, it is becoming so devalued that the sounds from a poker machine, have greatly replaced the opportunity for an abundance of live music with social interaction. If people did not respond to sounds, do you think poker machines would have those quirky noises?

OVER REPRESENTATION OF POKER MACHINES vs LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

- Given the amount of money citizens lose to poker machines at venues, there should be no reason why so many musicians are unable to be offered realistic performance fees. There are too many instances in the current climate where hard working, professional musicians are unable to secure paid work because venues are happily accepting offers from others to either play for much less than minimum wage or no cost at all. While an amount of gambling revenue is given to local community & sporting groups, they are often the same stakeholders losing their own money to the machines in the first place! This is a false community service and aims to throw just enough 'bread to take the hunger pang away for a meal'.

There are venues and event organisers taking advantage of musicians by declaring they will not pay a performer, but they will get 'exposure'. Paid performers get 'exposure' when paid for their time! Artists are basically operating their own business today therefore they already manage their own exposure campaigns.

- If there were less machines and more opportunities for local entertainers to perform, not only would more musicians have enough of their own money to exist and contribute to society, there would be more need for hospitality staff to serve hungry and thirsty audience members, more suppliers to provide additional stock to venues etc. More than not, a person going out for an evening is not at risk of losing their pay packet, house, car, relationship etc the way many gamblers do.
- It is not normal or healthy for a person to be seated, staring at a machine that flashes lights and plays little tunes. Human beings thrive and survive better when they are able to interact in a positive, social way. Music creates this environment and creates good memories at the same time.

To say the horse has bolted is lazy, ignorant and morally irresponsible. I have faith that NSW Govt. does not wish to create more poverty, less opportunity or community spirit therefore anticipate future attention, support and changes be made to breathe new life into our currently suffocating music industry.

"If music was not a beneficial way to promote learning, action, identifying emotions or cognitive thinking there would not be a need for companies to have jingles/songs to sell their products or TV & movies to have soundtracks and background music".

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

- Play School, The Wiggles, Hi Five are just three examples of the importance and positive impact music has in the learning and development of infants, children & young people. Imagine if the music industry gave more support to this by promoting and assisting the growth of musical therapy learning curriculum from tots to teens? This could include Vocational Educational Training Packages not just part of an overall early childhood, teaching or general music for all program. Supporting the creation of musicians whose role is to circuit centres and schools to entertain with intention should be given serious consideration.
- High school aged young people are not spoiled for choice with current positive age appropriate musical content. Young people have a great need to be accepted into peer dynamic and rolling out a similar model as the above early childhood one could help with -
 - Addressing bullying and isolation
 - Learning (using beats & rhymes assists in learning and remembering)
 - Self-acceptance and expression
 - Healthy and safe release of endorphins
 - Anger management, team work
 - Risky behaviour & anti-social reduction
 - Managing mental health issues (depression/anxiety/self-harm, eating disorders)

Supporting emerging positive young artists to perform at high schools would contribute to the above points as well as create an early culture of being able to attend live music where anti-social and risky behaviour does not have to be included. Create positive experiences now to create better industry growth now and in the future.

- Aged Care desperately needs financial support for implementing music therapy because at the current time, it often left up to under staffed inexperienced people or volunteers who don't have sufficient resources. Hearing, listening, singing, playing music for frail aged people, or those who may have dementia, Parkinson's and so on makes a remarkable difference to how they engage, speak, move, think and feel and as a society, we have a moral obligation to invest into this area.

ROYALTIES & REPORTING

- Being an independent musician is being the majority that need to wear many hats to succeed at any level. Because of this, it is easy and common for musicians to not know when they are not being treated / paid fairly. While some of the major issues for the local music industry are derived from global bodies they are nonetheless impacting at a local level.
- Community radio is an important media for Australian independent artists. In a digital environment, it does not make sense that data can't be collected and reported to APRA from ALL radio stations' playlists for transparency and fairness.
- Accurate reporting of plays could also assist in reflecting accuracy in music charts. Platforms such as Triple J unearthed would also be able to contribute to the National charts if -
 - Their current chart analysis was only based on streams and downloads, not how many likes/comments.
 - Artists were made aware of how and why to embed meta data of their uploaded music files with unique codes freely available from ARIA to track individual songs. Not all musicians have the luxury of paying an outsider engineer to master & embed their home recordings or know how to do this.

The lack of current accurate reporting impacts the NSW music industry because it limits artists being recognised, paid fairly, offered opportunities when they are identified. It does not give our community an accurate insight into the value and talent available at our doorsteps.

- Major media radio has a benchmark of 25% Australian music. One out of every four songs are from Australian artists. Digging deeper, how many of those 1 out of 4 are not signed to and funding one of the big record labels that are not Australian owned or controlled? The 25% ratio also highlights the imbalance of royalties leaving the state and country which is lost income for Australian musicians and tax raised revenue for the government.
- Global streaming platforms are having a direct negative impact on the NSW music industry. It is such that apart from a small number of artists (mostly contracted to the major labels) are not able to create anywhere near enough income to be sustainable. Basically, artists are working to create music for other people to profit from.
- By creating a culture of accessing music for free on various platforms the music industry and its workers are incredibly devalued by attitude and income. In a digital world, is it not possible to look at the possibility of only music embedded with a valid code by the uploader can be uploaded and not downloaded unless purchased? Could NSW blaze such a trail on the global stage?

VENUES CLOSING BECAUSE OF NOISE COMPLAINTS

As you would no doubt be aware, the issue of holding developers accountable for sound shielding/noise reduction in properties near existing venues is currently on the table. This is something that should be state wide, it makes absolutely no sense to move to a place near an existing venue to then say you don't like the noise and said venue gets shut down putting more people out of work, and silencing the community. What is next, no lights and sirens from emergency vehicles or cars on roads after 8pm?

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute my thoughts and I look forward to hearing of positive changes to the music industry in the near future.