

Submission
No 334

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

What you do, and why you do it.

My name is _____ ; I am 59 years old and have been a professional musician for most of my adult life. I book jobs for my bands and create employment for up to 5 people weekly, With my business partner _____ I organise and run 2 musical jams weekly one in the inner west and one out in Rooty Hill. We have been running the inner West jam for over 15 years and the one in Rooty hill has been running for over 10 years.

The jams are a good meter for the live music industry, you get to talk with many musicians from all walks of life, and the one recurring theme is just how bad the industry is. 10 years ago I would do up to 250 gigs a year, now I am lucky if I manage 150 in a 12 month period. The reasons for this depression in the live music arena a many and varied, but I have lived through the best times and these aren't them.

What works, what gives you hope about your local music community.

Very little seems to be working at the moment and all efforts to create a viable scene are being thwarted by laws that have done very little but hand over more venues to developers, Sydney is a place most professional musicians can hardly afford to live in any more as a working musician. My wages have not changed in over 20 years.

I have watched councils attempt to set up a musical corridor, Leichhardt council over 6 years ago and recently the Inner West Council, with regards to Sydenham, only to see all other industries but ours considered as viable. A green councillor suggested that we would be bad for local industry in Sydenham; obviously these people are very young or have short memories.

Balmain used to be one of the hubs for live music and at the time there were still industries in Balmain, but then the real estate boomed and now no musician or industry exist in that precinct, not the fault of musicians but of greedy developers.

What's not working right now / what are the challenges

Hotels are not working right now and the problem (with bad operators of hotels) should have been sorted out by attrition instead of handing them poker machine licences, sure a lot of hotels would have failed, but only the bad operators and we would have a vibrant hotel industry now instead of gaming houses, that give no concern for anything but 'Pokie profits'. Unfortunately we as musicians have aligned ourselves with them.

The second major flaw is that local musicians get no support from anyone but community radio and never make it into any relevant charts. There are no local shows on TV to support local acts and even JJJ no longer plays a part in promotion of local NSW bands.

In SA the councils are getting on board with promotion of live music and their night time revenue is increasing, Sydney and NSW could benefit from this kind of forward thinking. A lot of tourism is being lost as a result of the lack of planning on any level in NSW, the roads are a mess, Kings Cross has been destroyed, (there is even a move to change its name to Potts Point North). We must be the only city in the world not to have a vibrant night time culture and Sydney is supposed to be the biggest and the best...well not any more. There is no affordable housing close to the city either, it has become a denizen of the wealthy and I see no local Politicians doing much about it

What issues concern you/ should be addressed

Melbourne has a vibrant night time music industry and even a Night Mayor whose job it is to promote industry of the night, ie cafes, restaurants, night clubs, hotels and clubs.

The only body concerned in all this lot above seems to be the AHA and their agenda seems to be the promotion of gaming.

Woolworths and Coles own an incredible amount of Australian hotels, Today Woolies, via ALH, owns 330 licensed venues and more than 12,000 pokie machines, I don't think that would put them in a position to care about live music, just immoral earnings from a very addictive pastime,

Retail rival Coles controls over 3000 machines it owns through its network of 89 pubs and hotels. Some of Coles' ownership includes, 1st Choice Liquor Superstores, Liquorland, Vintage Cellars, Liquorland Hotel Group

Quantifying exactly how much they reap from these machines is difficult, as they both mask returns from their gambling operations SMH Jul 22, 2016

How they can help – what changes can they introduce to make it easier for you to do what you do.

Government and councils could reduce rates for premises that put on live music to ease the burden while they get established, say a 6 month period.

A number of shops are sitting empty and councils could support efforts to establish musical ventures, with funding which would generate work and income,

Lock out laws need to cease and desist immediately, a more visible police presence would keep violence down much better. More and better public transport, to get people off the streets quicker. Having played late night venues for over 30 years, I see very little violence when intoxicated punters are involved with something that makes them forget their lives for a while, as opposed to going to the pub and just getting drunk.

What you're willing and able to do to assist them with change

Whatever help is required, think tanks, round table discussions....but no committees as it takes so long to get organized the wind goes out of most people's sails in the interim. I have attended as many forums as I can, to deal with this undermining of our ability to make money and support ourselves