

**Submission
No 325**

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

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Date received: 28 February 2018

Live music and the support of live music across NSW is an integral part of an active creative economy, and the relationships between live music, the arts and creative sectors as a whole are critical to a healthy, vigorous and viable community. Who can imagine Australian culture without the contribution of musicians such as Katie Nolan, Nick Cave, The Saints, and many other performers that cross all music genres. Live music includes all music mediums from classical , musicals, to alternate and Indi rock, to country and western and cabaret. There are no limits in Australia to the quality, variety and signature importance of live music to our sense of our selves as a state, and as a country.

When pubs in NSW were allowed to take poker machines, and when BOB Carr started closing down venues in Sydney, and recently the affect on closing and restraining Live music venues as a result of the Lock Out Laws in Sydney, the live music scene in Sydney, and across country towns and other cities like Wollongong, Newcastle, Albury to Wagga Wagga, all lost venues, lost opportunities for musicians to perform and entertain music lovers. This is a loss of culture, a loss of opportunity, and a loss of future new bands and performers . This has occurred over the years, and the affect has been a steady erosion of opportunity and access to live music venues for audiences, and for musicians, the loss of the opportunity to perform, earn an income of sorts, and to contribute to the creative activity in their chosen fields.

The arts play a critical role in describing who we are. When we limit the capacity of creative expression, we restrain and diminish our own image of ourselves as communities and a people who do more than exist.

I chaired the Live Music Taskforce in Wollongong while I was a councillor. The aim of the Taskforce was to investigate the restraints to live music venues, the limits to opportunity for musicians, and the technical constraints and issues that needed to be addressed that were negatively impacting on the live music scene in Wollongong.

I encourage the Parliamentary committee investigating this issue to get a copy of the Live Music Action Plan and Live Music strategy developed as an important plank in Wollongong's cultural plan and Night Time Economy strategies. I championed the three reports and consultative studies to occur at the same time. Culture encompasses all forms of creative pursuit, including of course live music, and live music is an important enabler and a "feeder" of a healthy night time economy.

I could write a significant submission on this issue. I am constrained by time. I would like to thank the Parliamentary inquiry team for this initiative, and am happy to make myself available if that would be helpful to work through some of the issues we addressed with the first ever Live Music strategy for a regional city in Australia.

Thanks and regards

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