

**Submission
No 288**

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

Name: Ms Emily Lloyd-Tait

Date received: 27 February 2018

Emily Lloyd-Tait

To: The Honorable Paul Green, MLC, Chair

Re: Submission to the inquiry into the music and arts economy in New South Wales

Dear sir

I am a journalist in Sydney and I support a safe, diverse and vibrant music and arts culture across New South Wales.

I believe that venues in Sydney are over-regulated, and that this stifled environment is crushing the creative forces from our hospitality sectors. My particular areas of concern are:

a) regulation that has an outdated view of drinking culture

I have been of legal drinking age from a time before small bars, and I recall the type of aggressive environment you would encounter in booze barns on a Friday evening. Once small bars became prevalent in Sydney the culture matured. People drank less but better alcohol. They savoured education and diversity in their hospitality offerings. And for a young woman, these smaller, more intimate spaces felt safer and more welcoming than the huge corporate venues that had preceded them.

Regulation fails to differentiate between someone lingering over an 18-year-old whisky and someone knocking back house-pour spirits. Fights do not break out in venues serving \$15-a-glass pinot noir, and harassment of patrons is unheard of in venues with capacities that allow proper oversight by staff.

b) creative drain

As a journalist who primarily writes about the city's bars and restaurants I have witnessed a worrying trend of brain drain, as smart operators with vision and energy focus their attention on other, more accommodating cities. We are losing world-class talent to Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Bali, Singapore, London and New York at an astounding rate. It has become untenable for the visionary operator with fresh ideas, energy and experience to execute them in Sydney, and so they are bolstering the ranks in other cities, and our ability to attract visitors is severely compromised as a result.

c) cultural wasteland

Without bars to host them, we are denying a talented pool of musicians, performers, DJs, promoters, artists and creatives the opportunity to hone their skills and contribute in a positive way to Sydney's nightlife. Globally famous artists like Flume and Flight Facilities got their start in Sydney. We have the capacity to define culture on the world stage and we are refusing to nurture that potential.

Recommendations

We recognise that there are many interests that need to be balanced but would suggest that

ministerial oversight at State Government level be assigned, much like [trends in Europe](#). This person would be able to look out for the interests of the wider night-time economy and ensure communication and coordination between police, health, planning and transport.

I am willing to elaborate in person should I be called to give evidence.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Lloyd-Tait