

Submission
No 52

**INQUIRY INTO LIQUOR AMENDMENT (MUSIC
FESTIVALS) REGULATION 2019 AND GAMING AND
LIQUOR ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (MUSIC
FESTIVALS) REGULATION 2019**

Organisation: Splendour in the Grass

Date Received: 2 August 2019

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Date Received: 2 August 2019



Wednesday 31st July 2019
Legislative Council Regulation Council
NSW Legislative Council
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Committee,

Inquiry into Liquor Amendment (Music Festivals) Regulation 2019 and Gaming and Liquor Administration Amendment (Music Festivals) Regulation

Splendour in the Grass would like to thank the Parliament for the opportunity to contribute to the enquiry into Liquor Amendment (Music Festivals) regulation 2019 and Gaming and Liquor Administration Amendment (Music Festivals) Regulation 2019.

INTRODUCTION

Splendour in the Grass is an annual Australian Winter music festival held at North Byron Parklands, Yelgun, New South Wales. Since its inauguration in 2001, the festival has evolved from a one-day gathering into a 3-day event and is now considered Australia's largest and most iconic music festival. Every year, Splendour in the Grass features over 100 international and domestic acts, alongside a number of destination spaces that offer craft, arts, science, debate and comedy.

Splendour in the Grass is recognised as an industry leader in event operations on both a national and international level. The festival has been proactive in implementing best practice initiatives in areas such as; emergency management, safety management, WH&S, planning, sustainability, noise, ecology, environment, logistics, traffic and transport initiatives - with acknowledgement as such from its many key stakeholders and alongside extensive consultation with stakeholders and government agencies.

In March 2019, Splendour in the Grass finally secured a permanent home, after North Byron Parklands submitted a State Significant Development application to the NSW Department of Planning & Environment. The road to permanency was not without its hurdles and was a long and drawn out 11-year bureaucratic process.

REGULATION & COMPLIANCE

Currently in NSW there are a number of areas where bureaucratic red tape and inflexible planning laws prohibit a smooth process.

We would like to see more practical and consultative processes that support the music and arts industry allowing for growth and longevity, rather than creating obstructions. In our experience the political, regulatory, and compliance environment in NSW is significantly more difficult to conduct festivals in, than other states - QLD, VIC, TAS and WA in particular where



we also produce festivals. The NSW live entertainment sector is already under threat and at risk of becoming even less relevant if recent policies are continued with. The regulatory burden of operating festivals may drive some organisers across state lines and recent changes to festival regulation may see NSW slip further behind the other Australian States and Territories.

It is our belief that a liquor licence does not address the initial drug-related health concerns and we feel that the licensing changes were rushed, with little regard to the industry business model.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We would like to see government policies that adopt a more consistent approach to compliance and regulation in line with other events throughout the state.

Policies that:

- Address health risks at music festivals with a health-based approach
- Adopt a regulatory roundtable with industry peak body the Australian Festival Association, to ensure future regulatory changes are appropriately consulted and implemented
- Invest in evidence-based Harm Reduction services
- Recognise the significant economic, social and cultural benefits that the music and arts sector provides to NSW
- Encourage and maintain the establishment of new and existing music events across NSW
- Support music and arts events and reduce the likelihood of these events moving to other states and territories
- Provide clear operating guidelines that are uniform across events and across the state covering a range of matters relevant to this important and growing industry; and
- Provide business certainty to the operators who invest millions of dollars in this industry sector

Splendour in the Grass is a proud member of the Australian Festival Association (AFA) and contributed to the submission provided by the AFA as the peak body representing festivals.

Splendour in the Grass supports the submission including the defined issues and recommendations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information. Many thanks once again for your time.

Sincerely,