

**Submission
No 473**

SYDNEY'S NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Name: Mr Deane Hornsby

Date Received: 2 July 2019

Sydney is no longer a destination of choice - it's destined for no choice.

Over the last few years I have witnessed once thriving areas in Sydney decline in vibrancy and vitality, from a community of local entertainers and small businesses, to a city of "For Lease" signs and folks choosing to stay at home - or venture to other cities and overseas to experience the fun of life - without the feeling of being overseen by draconian laws and overzealous law enforcement.

Living in Elizabeth Bay, I've seen the fun squeezed out of Kings Cross and surrounding areas, yet somehow areas such as the Casino remain outside of lock-out laws, which is a confusing message. In my opinion, lock-out laws outside of gambling locations, investment in infrastructure which leads to a racecourse and arguably inappropriate advertising on our Iconic Sydney Opera house, seem at odds.

What kind of example are we setting to our young and visitors, where it's ok to gamble, yet to enjoy a night out of music, or attend a community festival, means the potential of being strip searched under seemingly vague conditions? I mean seriously, mobile strip search booths at our central train station?

While I could go on about the invasive presence of sniffer dogs, entertainers and performers unable to host and run events because of over-the-top presence and regulations, intimidation of innocent bystanders, of which I've personally experienced on a number of occasions, the question in my mind is is there a better way to manage this in a more collaborative way, including the community, to work together to ensure a safe, secure environment without having to over-police and shut places down?

We don't need to be wrapped in cotton wool. Working together we can make Sydney the fun vibrant city it was not long ago, and free up police time to address issues such as discrimination, bullying and domestic violence where early help and prevention can make a significant difference in people's lives.

I have a ton of respect for our law force and suspect that they themselves are frustrated by having to be deployed overseeing events, rather than proactively working to put an end to violence and abuse in our community. To work with community groups to lead programs which make it safer for them to celebrate together responsibly. Or to be that helping hand on the street small businesses welcome as they, as the engine of growth to our economy, work their butts off daily running their businesses.

I hand-on-heart welcome this new initiative of a committee to review the lock-out laws and to find a sensible way forward which creates a safe and sensational environment for Sydney. I really hope that the findings and actions from the committee are taken seriously and implemented at speed.

Yours sincerely,

Deane Hornsby