

Live Music industry supports new liquor laws for NSW

The commencement today of the new liquor laws for NSW from the lemma Government brings long overdue reform to the regulation of entertainment and live music in this state which will encourage opportunities and support the industry in the years to come.

We strongly support the introduction of sensible order of occupancy provisions under the new conference model for dealing with noise complaints, as we believe this will deliver more certainty for both venues and residents. Following established precedents in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, there are additional criteria that require the consideration of any structural changes over time in either the venue or neighbouring premises, that will deliver protection for residents and bring us into line with other states.

The introduction of the new On-Premises Entertainment Venue liquor licence, that slashes application fees from \$60,000 under the old regime for a nightclub licence in Sydney to \$500, will encourage the viability and accessibility of less commercial entertainment and grass-roots venues. The introduction of this licence marks a milestone for creative industries in NSW as it brings liquor licenses for theatres, cinemas and music venues together in a simple and inexpensive category.

The ability for under-18s to perform in licensed areas without committing an offence, provided a parent or guardian is present, is a very welcome change which will enable younger musicians to work alongside established professionals and begin their apprenticeship whilst also being able to earn an income. This new addition is strongly supported as we also believe it will raise the standard of musicianship and professionalism in the industry.

Further changes to the objectives of the legislation designed to acknowledge the relationship between the live music and entertainment industry and the Liquor Act will mean our interests will be taken into consideration when applying for licenses or varying conditions.

The introduction of the new \$500 general bar licence without poker machines or take away sales is supported by the live music industry, as are the long overdue reforms to the NSW restaurant licence. The new restaurant licence has huge potential for types of live music that will work well in this new environment, such as multicultural live music, jazz, classical guitar and piano, and singer-songwriters, all in an environment where under-18s are welcome.

We congratulate the Gaming and Racing Minister, Graham West, as well as the Office of Liquor, Gaming, and Racing, for their extensive consultation with the live music industry in the preparation of these exciting reforms, which have indisputable potential to reinvigorate the NSW live music scene and create jobs and opportunities.

Alliance Musicians' section delegate John Wardle said today: "These new liquor laws, alongside recent reform of the NSW planning system which entirely removes the Place of Public Entertainment (PoPE) regulations will deliver a brand-new and streamlined environment for live music and entertainment in NSW, that will slash fees and red tape. This is fantastic news for the cultural sector that will create jobs and opportunities."

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