



A statement from ARIA about the NSW Government's Music Festival licensing scheme

Everyone remembers their first gig or festival experience.

Going out to see a band, surrounded by likeminded souls, feeling the rush of freedom that washes over you as the music takes hold. It's been a rite of passage for many generations of music fans around Australia.

It is evident that live music is a very important part of the NSW cultural landscape. An Australia Council 2017 survey found that in 2016 more than half of NSW residents attended live music events.

In addition, Live Performance Australia revealed that over 8 million Australians attended contemporary music performances in 2017, generating a revenue of \$826 million. It was also reported that NSW was the second largest contributor in revenue (32.7%) and in attendance (29.9%).

The NSW government's new Music Festival licensing scheme is a policy that has the potential to harm the live music industry of this state.

In the lead-up to the scheme's implementation on 1 March, ARIA was in contact with the government to try and come to a solution that would be satisfactory to both sides of the debate.

We believe that when introducing such a scheme, there must be meaningful engagement with the Music Festival sector and have urged the government to commit to immediate and ongoing consultation with the sector to ensure that the scheme can be amended to make it fit for purpose.

The Music Festival sector is a significant industry that employs thousands of people, supports small businesses and enhances cultural tourism. These events have a significant financial flow-on effect in the areas in which they are held, impacting accommodation operators, food and drink vendors, transport services and more.

Music events provide positive, inclusive and safe spaces for people from all walks of life. They add much to the social and cultural vibrancy of our communities, both big and small, in addition to their financial contribution to the NSW economy.

They are also essential to our music ecosystem, to give our artists an opportunity to hone their craft and make new fans.

We call on the government to commit to immediate and ongoing consultation with the sector to properly understand this sector's operation, economic and cultural contribution, as well as the impact of these changes and potential alternative courses of action.

ARIA is ready to provide whatever assistance necessary to aid the process of collaboration and engagement with the sector to ensure that the government is equipped with all the relevant information in order to make informed decisions on this important issue.