

Live music

The Way Forward

Supporting a sustainable live music scene in Victoria



The story so far

Victoria has a diverse and vibrant live music scene, which contributes to the culture and economy of Victoria.

Melbourne is widely acknowledged as the leading music city in Australia. It has individual venues that are known internationally. Live music is made accessible through the pub music scene dispersed throughout Melbourne and regional centres in Victoria.

Demographic and land use changes in our inner urban areas are increasing the residential population and making these areas more 'mixed' in character. Conflict between residential and other land uses can emerge as a consequence of these changes.



Mustang

Photo Acknowledgements

Thanks to Laura Jean, Mustang, The R.I.P. Riders, Compact Rhythm and Matt Deller.

The Live Music Taskforce

In 2003, the State Government convened a Live Music Taskforce to investigate music noise from live music venues and the rights and responsibilities of live music venue proprietors, nearby property owners and residents.



Compact Rhythm

The Live Music Taskforce examined planning and building regulation, environment protection, and health and liquor licensing laws that all regulate and influence live music noise.

The Taskforce agreed that live music should be accorded a recognised cultural value in Victoria whilst ensuring continued protection for residential amenity.

The importance of best practice venue management in containing music noise was acknowledged. And it was agreed that there were opportunities for better information and communication between stakeholders to manage the issue.

One of the key principles adopted by the Live Music Taskforce is that the 'onus of responsibility' – for the cost of management of music noise – 'should fall upon the agent of change'. For the resident, this implies a continued protection of amenity in the event of a change in venue operation or the development of a new venue. For the venue operator, this implies that where a venue is currently compliant with relevant noise attenuation standards and its operation does not change, new residential or other noise sensitive development should not lead to new compliance costs for the venue.

Recommendations from the Live Music Taskforce



Laura Jean

The Report and Recommendations were presented to the Government in December 2003.

The report recognises that the regulatory framework for the management of music noise is working well, due to the combined efforts of music noise regulators and responsible venue operators. However, a number of changes can be made to the system to achieve better management of the issue.

The recommendations from the Live Music Taskforce process were directed at the following beneficial outcomes:

- Providing greater state and local policy recognition to the cultural role of the live music scene, particularly as part of the diversity of uses legitimately found in activity centres.
- Commencing as a live music industry initiative, the development of 'best practice' approaches to venue management.
- Establishing for planning purposes, the principle that the 'onus of responsibility' – for the cost of noise management – 'should fall upon the agent of change'.

- Providing for the development and testing of Environment Improvement Plans as a mechanism for existing venues that are having difficulty complying with noise standards, with the aim to move towards compliance. The plans will be developed by the venues in consultation with regulators and their local communities.
- Clarifying, coordinating and better communicating the operation of various jurisdictions and regulators to all stakeholders.

Following consideration of the Report and Recommendations, the Government is committed to working jointly with the music industry, the development industry, residents and councils to implement the recommendations.



The R.I.P. Riders

Implementation Plan

Initiative	Milestone	Key agency	Comment
<i>Pilot an Environment Improvement Plan.</i>	Pilot to commence ASAP	Venue operator(s) with support from EPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Environment Improvement Plan will be prepared by the venue operator to address management of music noise from the venue. The plan will be developed in consultation with the community potentially affected by noise emissions and relevant agencies. The plan will provide commitments to actions and timeframes for improved environmental management.
<i>Implement principle that the 'onus of responsibility should fall upon the agent of change'.</i> <i>Actions include:</i> 1. <i>Amendment to the Victoria Planning Provisions.</i> 2. <i>Planning Practice Advice.</i>	Ongoing	DSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affirms existing use rights for both residents and venue operators within the planning system. State Government will write to all Councils advising of actions to apply this principle in the planning system.
	August 2004	DSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend State Planning Policy Framework to provide building design and urban design techniques to be used to respond to adverse amenity effects of noise emissions.
	September 2004	DSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Practice note to inform planning authorities on good practice and consistent methodologies in planning and development.
<i>Development of noise management plans for individual venues and industry-wide 'Best Practice Guidelines'.</i>	Ongoing	Music industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The live music industry will develop 'Industry Best Practice Guidelines'. The adoption of the standards will be used by venue operators to implement individual music venue noise management plans.
<i>An on-line one-stop shop to give Victorians advice on rights and responsibilities in relation to music noise.</i>	September 2004	LMT Implementation Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clarity and better communicate the rights, responsibilities and procedures in the management of music noise. Information will be targeted at specific stakeholders including residents and venue operators.
<i>Establish a Live Music Taskforce Implementation Group.</i>	Ongoing (convene June 2004)	DSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Implementation Group will provide advice to lead agencies on the implementation on the Live Music implementation initiatives. To include representatives from DSE, EPA, Liquor Licensing, Victoria Police, Arts Victoria, local government and the music industry. Following the evaluation of industry-developed Best Practice Guidelines and the operation of venue management plans, the Implementation Group will be asked to advise on the development of a 'Code of Practice' for matters such as venue location, design and management.
<i>Recognition of the cultural value and economic significance of the live music industry to Victoria.</i>	Next policy review	Arts Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The value of Victoria's live music scene to be acknowledged as part of the next policy review.

Published by the Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment
Melbourne, May 2004

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