

LIVE MUSIC ACTION AGENDA

Live music is a vital part of Victoria's culture. In 2010, the Victorian live music industry had been almost regulated out of existence by the then state Labor government.

In a call to action, the live music industry rallied for change on the steps of the Victorian Parliament. The Coalition Government promised to take action to support live music and is delivering on that promise.

The Coalition Government's Live Music Action Agenda

With a whole-of-government, multi-faceted approach to protecting Victoria's vibrant live music scene the Coalition Government has announced a package of regulatory reform across the planning, building, environment and liquor licensing portfolios.

These regulatory reforms will address key challenges faced by the industry such as noise management, building standards, over-regulation and compliance which threaten the viability and growth of live music venues and the industry as a whole.

Through close collaboration and a successful partnership with the live music industry, local government and key agencies, the Coalition Government's Live Music Action Agenda delivers a package of reforms to manage how change around music venues can best be embraced.

Importantly, these reforms mean the Coalition Government has addressed each of the issues highlighted in Music Victoria's 2012 Industry Position Paper.

The Live Music Action Agenda

1. **Licensing** – new laws and streamlined licensing controls
2. **Planning** – new Particular Provision and Practice Note
3. **Building** – reducing the regulatory burden for smaller venues
4. **Assistance package** – \$500,000 Live Music Noise Attenuation Assistance Scheme
5. **Environment and Noise** – review of noise regulations

Live Music Action Agenda

- Coalition Government established the Live Music Roundtable.
- Alcohol-free underage and mixed-age live music events on licensed premises no longer require a permit.
- Live Music Noise Attenuation Assistance Scheme to be made available in 2015.
- SEPP N2 Discussion Paper released for consultation on issues of noise regulation with detailed review and new regulations to be completed by 2016.
- Introduce legislation to require the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation to consider the agent of change principle when dealing with noise complaints.
- Finalise planning Particular Provision and Practice Note and introduce into the planning system.
- Introduce building reforms to reduce regulatory burden on venues less than 500 square meters in size.

Licensing

New laws passed earlier this year ensure that live music venues can more easily host under-age events. The laws, which came into effect this month, remove the need for liquor licensees to get approval to host alcohol-free under-age and all-ages live music events in licensed venues.

With the introduction of further new legislation, the Coalition Government will also reflect the agent of change principle in liquor licensing controls by ensuring the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation is able to take this principle into account when considering liquor licensing applications and submissions around live music venues.

WHEN: Legislation to be introduced to the Victorian Parliament – August 2014

Planning

By introducing the agent of change principle into the planning system, responsibility for noise attenuation measures required in order to obtain planning approval will now rest with the 'agent of change'.

In practical terms this means that if a live music venue seeks to expand, they will be responsible for attenuating any noise effects that are caused by that change. Similarly, a new residential planning proposal close to a live music venue will be responsible for noise attenuation.

This will be achieved through a new Particular Provision and Planning Practice Note that will

help planning applicants and decision makers decide how to address the agent of change principle when preparing an application or considering a residential proposal at or close to a live music venue.

WHEN: Planning Practice Note and Particular Provision – August/September.

Strengthening the State Planning Policy Framework as part of the Coalition Government's broader planning reform agenda will also ensure that planning decision makers give consideration to supporting existing live music venues.

WHEN: State Planning Policy Framework ongoing reform process – 2014.

Building

Changes to the Building Regulations will cut red tape for live music venues less than 500 square metres in size, in line with the Red Tape Reduction Commissioner's recommendations.

By reducing the regulatory burden the Coalition Government will reduce compliance costs for small live music venues while still ensuring appropriate building controls and safety standards are in place.

WHEN: Changes to Building Regulations – end of 2014.

Live Music Noise Attenuation Assistance Scheme

The Coalition Government will establish a Live Music Noise Attenuation Assistance Scheme.

A total funding pool of \$500,000 will be available across two streams:

- **Heritage Grants** to the owner of heritage listed buildings operating as a live music venue and which meet appropriate criteria
- **General Grants** to owners of live music venues situated in a non-heritage protected building, who have not been captured by the agent of change reforms

The scheme will provide some financial assistance to live music venue operators to assist them to minimise the impact of music sound on the users of nearby premises.

The grants will be provided to operators who are required to take steps to attenuate music noise and meet a clear set of criteria.

Noise attenuation measures that may be supported by the scheme could include:

- installing acoustic insulation in walls, ceiling and floors
- installing sound absorbing materials such as heavy drapes and carpet
- installing acoustic or air-lock doors
- sealing gaps in doors and windows.

Decisions on grant applications will be made by the Minister for Planning and/or the Minister for Liquor and Gaming Regulation.

WHEN: Grant scheme to commence - 2014.

Environment and Noise Management

The Coalition Government has released a discussion paper on the State Environmental Protection Policies for noise, including music noise from public premises like music venues.

For the first time since 1989, noise standards from commercial, industrial and public premises will be reviewed in detail to ensure that these standards remain current and appropriate. The updated noise policies will ensure noise is managed in a way that gets the balance right – ensuring adequate protection for the community from noise, while setting realistic, achievable and clear standards that support business to meet its obligations.

The Environment Protection Authority is now inviting community feedback on a discussion paper. For more information see www.epa.vic.gov.au/our-work/setting-standards/environmental-standards-reform/noise.

WHEN: Consultation – 2014.
Revised State Environment Protection Policy – 2016.

Keeping the Live Music Action Agenda Alive – The Live Music Roundtable

The Premier's Live Music Roundtable was established in 2012 and brings together representatives of the music industry, licensees of live music venues, local councils, Victoria Police, Government and other relevant experts to discuss liquor licensing, planning and other related issues faced by the live music industry.

The Victorian Government's Live Music Roundtable released new guidelines – *Best Practice Guidelines for Live Music Venues*, which help managers of live music venues run a safe and successful business. The Guidelines were produced collaboratively between stakeholders in the live music industry, Music Victoria and the Victorian Government.

The Live Music Roundtable has a full and ongoing agenda to tackle challenges faced by the live music industry. The Coalition Government is providing ongoing support to the industry through additional funding for Music Victoria and secretarial support to the Live Music Roundtable.

WHEN: Live Music Roundtable – Ongoing.

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