



Gladys Berejiklian

Premier of NSW

Troy Grant

Minister for Police

Brad Hazzard

Minister for Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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SAFETY AT MUSIC FESTIVALS TO BE IMPROVED

The NSW Government will improve safety at music festivals by implementing the recommendations of an expert panel.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian convened the expert panel following the tragic deaths of two young people who attended the Defqon.1 festival in September 2018.

The expert panel's recommendations, all of which have been accepted in-principle by the NSW Government, focus on three key areas:

- Improving the regulation of music festivals by introducing a new, specific and consistent licensing regime to improve safety, and provide certainty for the music festival industry and other stakeholders;
- Strengthening drug and alcohol education, and providing more support for frontline health workers at music festivals; and
- Strengthening laws to target drug suppliers by introducing a new offence that will hold drug dealers responsible for deaths they cause, and trialling on-the-spot fines for drug possession at music festivals.

"Music festivals are a significant part of NSW's entertainment scene, and an important part of our economy - but we owe it to young people, and their parents and families, to make sure they are safe," Ms Berejiklian said.

"The new licensing regime we are introducing, combined with better regulatory coordination, will ensure that events with a poor track record and heightened risk will face greater oversight from the authorities."

The NSW Government will also create a new offence that means drug dealers will be held responsible for any deaths they cause.

"Drug dealers who prey on our young people, and seek to profit by peddling illicit substances at music festivals, are on notice," Ms Berejiklian added.

As recommended by the expert panel, to ensure that offenders face swift and certain justice, the NSW Government will also trial on-the-spot fines for people who are caught in possession of illegal drugs at music festivals, rather than issuing a court attendance notice.

"Together with ongoing, high visibility policing at music festivals, these measures will send a very strong message that illegal drug dealing and drug use will not be tolerated in NSW," Minister for Police Troy Grant said.

The NSW Government will also strengthen the existing approach to drug and alcohol education, in accordance with the expert panel's recommendations.

"The expert panel has recommended that more be done to educate festival-goers about the dangers of taking illegal drugs and we will be strengthening our work in this area," said Minister for Health Brad Hazzard.

"This will involve the provision of additional support to health professionals who work hard every day to try and prevent drug-related deaths."

"I would like to thank the expert panel - Police Commissioner Mick Fuller APM, NSW Chief Health Officer Dr Kerry Chant and Chair of the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority Philip Crawford - for their advice," Ms Berejiklian said.

A copy of the report can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2PUjcOg>.

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