

Violence in and around Entertainment Districts: A Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Late-Night Lockout Legislation

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Abstract

Violence in entertainment districts is a major problem across urban landscapes throughout the world. Research shows that licensed premises are the third most common location for homicides and serious assaults, accounting for one in ten fatal and nonfatal assaults. One class of interventions that aims to reduce violence in entertainment districts involves the use of civil remedies: a group of strategies that use civil or regulatory measures as legal levers to reduce problem behavior. One specific civil remedy used to reduce problematic behavior in entertainment districts involves manipulation of licensed premise trading hours. This article uses generalized linear models to analyze the impact of lockout legislation on recorded violent offences in two entertainment districts in the Australian state of Queensland. Our research shows that 3 a.m. lockout legislation led to a direct and significant reduction in the number of violent incidents inside licensed premises. Indeed, the lockouts cut the level of violent crime inside licensed premises by half. Despite these

impressive results for the control of violence inside licensed premises, we found no evidence that the lockout had any impact on violence on streets and footpaths outside licensed premises that were the site for more than 80 percent of entertainment district violence. Overall, however, our analysis suggests that lockouts are an important mechanism that helps to control the level of violence inside licensed premises but that finely grained contextual responses to alcohol-related problems are needed rather than one-size-fits-all solutions.

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