

Ms Mary Porter AM MLA
Chair, Standing Committee on Planning, Public Works,
and Territory and Municipal Services
Legislative Assembly for the ACT
Civic Square
London Circuit
Canberra ACT 2601

Inquiry into Live Community Events

Dear Ms Porter

I am writing in support of live community events in Canberra.

A key question is what kind of community do we want to be? I hope that you, like me, want to be part of a community that celebrates the diverse talents of its members, and encourages them to grow and develop.

Live events are fundamental to building a vibrant, sustainable, liveable city – where younger people feel able to stay in Canberra rather than leave for the brighter lights of Sydney or Melbourne.

Genuine community events are run by the community, for the community. They may be assisted by government, and I am grateful for the ACT Government's efforts in that regard, but they belong to the community. They require a range of venues, including spaces available for hire by community groups. These venues must be accessible and affordable for both community organisers and attendees. They must also allow people to gather and interact, without being subject to excessive noise restrictions.

A strong community should support participation by its members. It is important that community events foster opportunities to perform in public as well as create an audience. This is particularly significant for emerging performers, to build confidence and a support base before approaching more commercial venue operators.

Yours sincerely

Simone Swenson

15 July 2010