



NSW Police Force

Our Ref: F/2018/30789

Your Ref:

24 August 2018

Pamela Morales
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

By email: pamela.morales@planning.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Morales

**North Byron Parklands Cultural Events Site, Yelgun – SSD 8169 and MP 09-0028
MOD 3
Feedback - NSW Police Force (“NSWPF”)**

The NSWPF have considered the Response to Submissions report (**RTS**) provided on 27 July 2018 and comment as follows, following the numbering in Appendix H (NSW Police Force – Submission Response) of the RTS.

2.1 Existing Resourcing Arrangements

Although Splendour have devoted considerable security resources to the festivals (with 372 security personnel being hired for the 2017 Splendour festival) and having their own industry best practice security management systems in place, a major security breach still occurred during the 2018 Splendour festival.

A social media celebrity (Shammi Prasad) was able to bypass event security by hiding in a wheelie bin and having a friend (dressed as groundsman) wheel the bin into festival grounds (see video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8S6Og4DCyPo>). This incident has also been published by various media outlets.

NSWPF's main concern from a policing perspective is community safety. If event security can be breached with relative ease, NSWPF have concerns for the safety of festival attendees. Whilst Splendour states that public safety liability rests with event organisers for events held at Parklands and that the level of police resources allocated for Splendour in the Grass events is higher than other contemporary events, NSWPF still have a responsibility to preserve life and ensure the safety of the community. Accordingly, NSWPF considers the level of police resources allocated for events at Parklands to be justified.

2.2 Proposed Resourcing Arrangements

Whilst Parkland have recently committed to providing accommodation for user-pay police, this issue is still the subject of ongoing discussions.

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However, NSWPF's current preference is for Parklands to provide offsite hotel style accommodation (for safety and security purposes).

3. Crowd Crush

During the 2018 Splendour festival, an incident took place during the Kendrick Lamar performance. This was described as a crowd collapse in front of the stage on flat ground which allegedly involved 100 patrons. At this time, NSWPF have not been able to gain a video or further information in respect of this matter.

It was suggested that if the collapse took place on uneven ground, the risk would be increased. Accordingly, NSWPF conditionally supports a proposed increase of 42,500 patrons per event day for events held in 2019 and 2020, subject to the further comments below. This will allow an opportunity to assess Splendour's capability to safely conduct the event before any approval is granted to allow an increase to 50,000 patrons.

The increase in occupancy to 42,500 patrons will only be supported by NSWPF when the proposals and recommendations in the RTS relating to such an increase are implemented and able to be assessed against the increase in occupancy. As previously discussed with Parklands/Splendour, NSWPF also requires:

- (a) the erection of a permanent police command post and custody facility; and
- (b) the preparation of the amphitheatre so as to avoid a future crowd collapse incident.

Having said that, NSWPF remains gravely concerned regarding the possibility of a crowd crush incident occurring. Although the RTS states that Worksafe Victoria determined there was insufficient evidence to establish any offences by the promoter of the 2016 crowd crush incident during the Falls Festival in Lorne, NSWPF have obtained confirmation that class action proceedings have commenced against the organisers of the Falls Festival by Maddens Lawyers who represent 56 group members who suffered injuries during the incident.

Accordingly, it is critical that proper procedures are put in place to ensure that a similar incident does not occur with the increased patrons.

4. Traffic

During the 2017 Splendour festival, Splendour introduced strategies that ensured the smooth running of the event. However, NSWPF holds concerns regarding the capability of road infrastructure to handle the increased traffic if approval is granted for an increase in patrons to 42,500 per event day.

It may be appropriate for Splendour/Parklands to consider undertaking roadwork to provide a longer turn lane to allow vehicles to pass the event site (rather than sitting in the queue).

4.2 Proposed Additional Traffic Mitigation measures

4. Yelgun Rest Area

The use of Yelgun Rest Area as a last resort alternative pick up zone is not supported. The purpose of the rest area is to provide a place for passing traffic/heavy vehicles to stop for a rest break – not for a festival

overflow area. As previously noted in our letter of 28 May 2018, the use of the rest area by festival goers will force motorists to continue on past that rest area with the possibility of a fatigue related crash.

5/6. No Stopping Zones/Tow Trucks

These proposals are supported. However, we also suggest that Splendour consider applying for a Clearway to allow illegally parked vehicles to be towed. Tow trucks should be located on site to allow for quick deployment to remove any illegally parked vehicles.

It may also be appropriate for Splendour/Parkland to consult with the relevant local council and RMS if they are prepared to accept the risks involved due to the increased traffic.

5.3 Medical Resources

NSWPF also holds concerns regarding the current level of medical resources allocated by Splendour. During the 2018 Splendour Festival, NSWPF detained an individual who was under the influence of drugs and had a history of mental illness. NSWPF attempted to arrange for an ambulance to transport the individual to hospital, but were advised that there would be a wait time of 45 minutes before an ambulance would become available. Accordingly, NSWPF made the decision to transport the individual to the hospital themselves given the lengthy wait time. This tied up police resources which were otherwise needed at the festival.

5.4 Proposed Drug Mitigation Measures

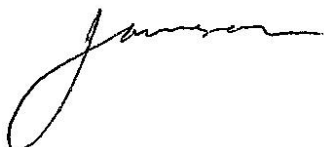
NSWPF understands that drug dog operations will be funded by Splendour from 2019 onwards.

General Comments

The concessions and mitigation strategies proposed in the RTS appear to be reasonable and prudent. However, these should be tested in a process of gradual increase (to 42,500 patrons per event day) prior to approval for an increase to 50,000 patrons per event day.

If you have any queries regarding these comments, please do not hesitate to contact myself or Detective Chief Inspector Brendon Cullen [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully



Jameson Shi
Lawyer

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NSW Police Force