

# NSW Venue Sustainability

## Health Check Report







*Nadeena Dixon at The Lansdowne Hotel.  
photo credit: Bones Collective*

## Acknowledgement



Green Music Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and meet, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge with gratitude the pivotal role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to play within the Australian community—including the music scene.



# AUTHORS

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This report is produced by Green Music Australia. Green Music Australia is a registered charity, harnessing the cultural power of our influential music scene to create a greener, safer future. This report has been written by Emma Bosworth and Georgia Cooke.

Green Music Australia is a member of the Creative Climate consortium, the new national peak body for arts and climate.

## CONTRIBUTORS

A big thanks to Anika Ostendorf, Berish Bilander, Bridget Heazlewood, Heidi Cummings, Luke Logemann, and Shelley Anderson for their contributions to both the Green Venue Program and this report. Thanks to ChargeWorks for the completion of the program's seven energy audits and iSystain for their hosting and support of Amidesi.

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King St Newcastle. photo credit: @jadenmarc

# FOREWORD

Live venues are the beating heart of Australia's diverse music sector. They are places of creativity and community – spaces where artists and audiences come together to connect. But as the climate crisis deepens, our venues face growing challenges to adapt. Rising energy costs, tightening regulations, and shifting audience expectations are converging to create a new operational reality which demands a rapid green transformation.

Through Green Music Australia's [\*Green Venue Program\*](#), we've worked

closely with nine venues across New South Wales to understand their environmental impact and identify practical pathways for change. What we found is both encouraging and urgent.

**There is an extraordinary opportunity to improve the energy and operational resilience of live music venues.** Venues could save thousands per year by switching energy providers, improving efficiency, and installing solar. Even after purchasing accredited renewable energy off the grid via GreenPower, venues would still see net savings –



demonstrating that climate action is not only possible, but profitable. If scaled across the state, NSW venues could collectively save \$1.53 million and reduce emissions by over 70,000 tonnes per annum — the equivalent of taking over 19,000 cars off the road.

Venues want to act. Many have already taken meaningful steps such as purchasing GreenPower, switching to LED lighting, improving insulation, and supporting environmental initiatives. But there is still a long way to go. Most venues are not sufficiently resourced and supported to meet growing audience, artist or government expectations. New laws are coming into force that will reshape how venues operate. Single-use plastic bans, organic waste separation, mandatory climate reporting and emissions reduction targets are no longer distant policy ideas, but are now legislated across NSW and the wider country. Without coordinated support to take action, we risk leaving behind small and independent venues who are vital to our music ecosystem.

This report offers a snapshot of where venues are now and where they need to be in a net-zero world. It highlights the opportunities for emissions reduction and cost savings, particularly in energy efficiency and management. It also underscores the importance of embedding sustainability into governance, procurement, and cultural practice – including deeper engagement with First Nations communities.

To meet the moment, we need sector-wide investment and a shared commitment to climate justice. That means funding for energy upgrades, greater support for venues to adapt, and the inclusion of climate adaptation and mitigation in national and state arts policies.

We hope this report serves as a foundation for a future where venues are not only surviving, but thriving – powered by clean energy, supported by strong policy, and guided by the values of care for Country.



**Emma Bosworth**

National Programs Manager,  
Green Music Australia



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2025, Green Music Australia launched its Green Venue Program – an initiative designed to help live music venues lead the way in climate action. Underpinned by a comprehensive [Green Venue Guide](#), the program brought together nine venues across regional and metropolitan New South Wales to assess their impact and drive meaningful progress in sustainable practices.

Using Amidesi, Green Music Australia's custom sustainability measurement platform, venues were assessed across key impact areas:

- **Energy**
- **Waste**
- **Water**
- **Governance and Operations**
- **First Nations**
- **Procurement**
- **Food & Beverage**
- **Transport**

Venues received tailored guidance throughout the process, with those that demonstrated commitment to sustainability awarded Green Venue Certification – a public recognition of their efforts to reduce emissions, improve resource efficiency, and embed environmental responsibility into their operations.

This Venue Health Check report synthesises the findings from the pilot of nine participating venues, offering insights into where venues are taking action, where challenges remain, and how the sector can evolve in line with emerging policy and climate targets.

## Green Venue Certification pilot participants:



**Anita's Theatre, Bondi Pavillion, Brunswick Picture House, Club 77, ICC Sydney, King Street Newcastle, La La La's, The Lansdowne Hotel, Metro Theatre.**



# KEY FINDINGS

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**NSW music venues could save \$1.53 million in energy costs and reduce emissions by over 70,000 CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes per annum by improving their building envelope, negotiating contracts, using and maintaining efficient equipment, and purchasing GreenPower.**

As part of Green Music Australia's delivery, energy audits by ChargeWorks were conducted at seven small- to medium-sized NSW venues. The results showed that venues could reduce their energy bills by an average of \$10,388 per year through actions such as switching energy providers, improving efficiency, and installing solar PV<sup>1</sup>. If a portion of those savings were reinvested into purchasing accredited GreenPower, venues would still clear net savings of \$3,736 annually (per venue), while reducing associated electricity emissions to zero<sup>1</sup>.

Scaled across the state, this opportunity is striking: music venues across NSW could feasibly save \$1.53 million annually

and reduce emissions by 70,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year by implementing basic energy efficiency measures and purchasing GreenPower. While some of these actions, such as refrigeration fixes, installing solar, and improving heating, ventilation, and air conditioning efficiency require upfront investment, other actions including switching suppliers do not. With an average upfront investment of \$1,900 - \$18,000, venues would see an average payback and return on investment in one-four years.

These preliminary findings paint a picture for how small- and medium-sized venues could take a coordinated approach to energy management - improving their overheads and environmental impact. Further research would be beneficial to improve our understanding on how to best improve the energy and climate resilience of music venues in NSW and across the country.

## Assumptions:

\* Calculations assume that savings from optional upgrades/actions (e.g. lighting, HVAC, solar, contract negotiation) can be replicated across the sector. This scenario assumes all venues adopt recommended measures.

\* Large-scale multi-purpose venues (56 of 795 total) are not represented in the extrapolated data. Total saving estimates reflect a 75% small (up to 499 capacity) / 25% medium venue (500-1999 capacity) split across NSW. Further data collection and analysis would be required to accurately assess the savings potential of large-scale venues.



## 2 Emissions from waste and gas remain under-addressed.

While electricity is the largest source of emissions, waste and gas still make up a significant share of a venue's carbon footprint. Venues that serve food face additional challenges, with only 22% using food and organics bins, suggesting landfill emissions are likely underestimated in our measurements due to the release of methane, a greenhouse gas 28 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> over a 100 year period<sup>3</sup>.

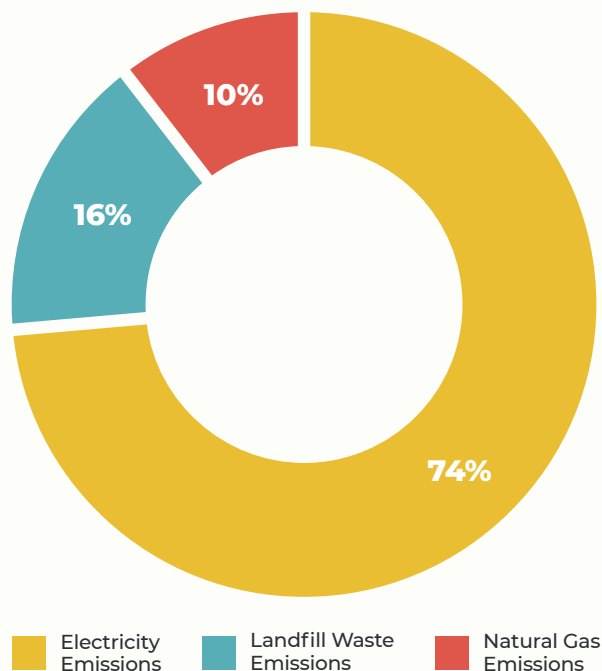
More than half of these food serving venues also rely on gas for cooking, creating additional barriers to meeting emissions reduction targets.

## 3 Venues need increased support and education to be prepared for emerging regulatory changes.

The live music sector is facing a raft of new environmental regulations. However, most venues aren't yet aware of changing legislation, nor prepared to implement operational changes to adhere to new guidelines. These include:

- **Mandatory Climate Disclosures:** From 2025, large entities must report climate-related financial risks, with likely flow-on effects for suppliers and partners<sup>4</sup>.
- **Landfill Diversion:** NSW aims to divert 80% of all waste streams from landfill by 2030<sup>5</sup>.

**Chart 1: Comparison of venue emissions generated from landfill, gas and electricity use.**



- **FOGO Legislation:** In 2026, NSW will implement a phased rollout of food and organic waste bins across hospitality businesses.<sup>5</sup>
- **Single-Use Plastic Bans:** A phased ban across states is prompting shifts in procurement and service models<sup>5</sup>.
- **Net Zero Targets:** NSW is legislating a 50% emissions reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050<sup>6</sup>.

Without targeted investment and practical education, many venues will struggle to adapt – putting them at risk of falling behind as regulations tighten.





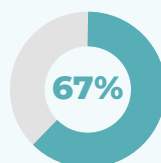
Energy Audit at Club 77  
photo credit: Bones Collective

# ENERGY FINDINGS

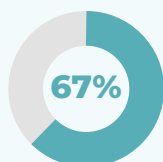
## WORKING WELL



use **LED lighting**  
to reduce energy use

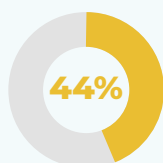


have **energy-saving practices or policies** in place

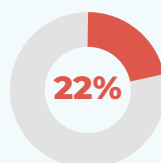


have improved  
**building insulation**

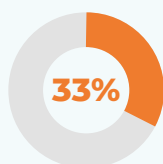
## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



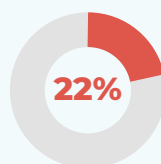
purchase  
**GreenPower**



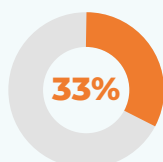
have **solar installed**;  
another **22%** have  
expressed interest



have **adjusted thermostats**  
to reduce energy demand



use an **energy monitor**  
to track daily usage



still use **gas**;  
All gas-using venues  
use it for **cooking**



Energy use is one of the largest contributors to emissions in live music venues. It is also one of the most immediate and cost-effective areas for intervention. A series of energy audits revealed that venues are often using suboptimal energy contracts, lack basic monitoring tools, and are missing out on efficiency gains from relatively simple upgrades.

The findings show that by switching energy providers, optimising contracts, and investing in refrigeration and HVAC improvements, venues can reduce their operating costs significantly - often with a return on investment in under three years. Solar installation offers longer-term savings and emissions reductions, while purchasing accredited renewable energy via GreenPower provides an immediate pathway to decarbonisation.

Despite this, only two venues use energy monitoring systems to regularly monitor their electricity. This suggests that while awareness is growing, many venues lack education to know how to best understand their energy usage and identify avenues for change.

Gas is still being used by 33% of venues, and by 60% of food-serving venues. Electrifying appliances is vital in ensuring Australia's emissions reduce in line with committed targets, but can be complex to implement in older buildings. With Victoria recently committing to all electric appliances in new commercial buildings by 2027 and City of Sydney mandating all electric appliances in new homes – there is a growing pressure for businesses to switch.

## Energy Recommendations

- Support venues to undertake energy audits to understand potential cost and emissions savings.
- Provide targeted grants or low-interest loans for solar, efficiency and electrification upgrades.
- Expand uptake to GreenPower and improve education around its benefits.
- Develop shared procurement models to help smaller venues access better energy rates.

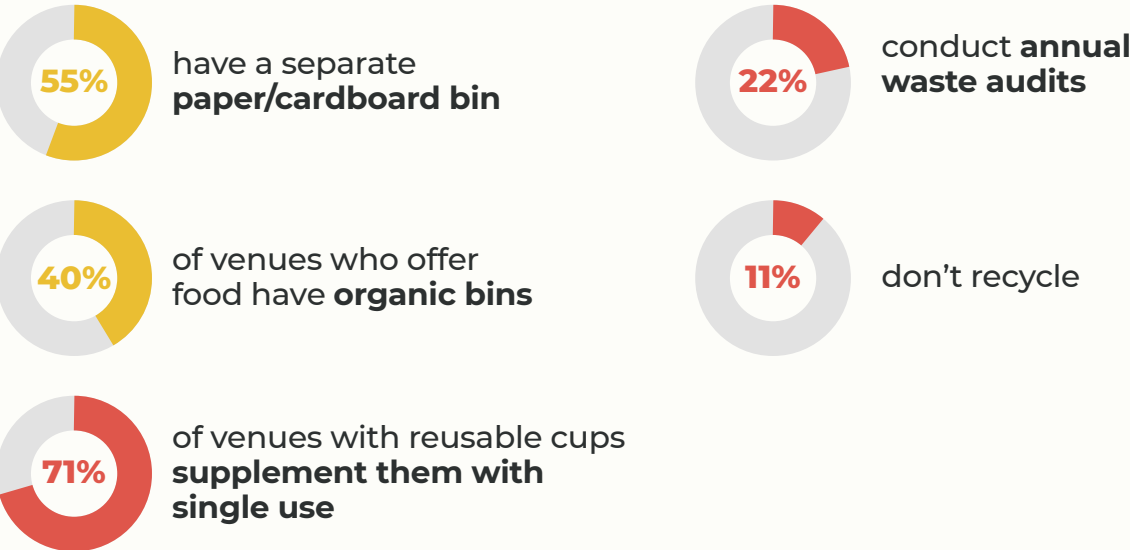






# WASTE FINDINGS

## WORKING WELL



## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



	Drinkware	Crockery & Cutlery
 Reusable	78%	80%
 Plastic	33%	40%
 Compostable**	33%**	60%**
 Paper/Cardboard	44%	80%

\*\*Of all the venues that use compostables, 75% of the products go to landfill



Waste management varies significantly across venues. While most have implemented basic waste sorting systems and participate in the NSW container deposit scheme, few have the systems in place to achieve NSW's 2030 target of an 80% landfill diversion rate<sup>5</sup>.

When serving food or beverages, the majority of venues used more than one type of serving container. While many use reusable cups, nearly all also procure single-use compostable or plastic, citing a need due to busy periods and space constraints.

Compostable plastic packaging, such as BioCups, were often used with good intentions but disposed of in landfill due to the absence of

commercial composting services. This highlights a common misconception that compostable options are a better alternative – when in reality they are ending up in landfill. Notably, NSW EPA disallow a range of compostable and biodegradable products from entering waste bins after research found that some fibre-based compostables create PFAS when degrading<sup>7</sup>.

The only venue currently achieving an 80% landfill diversion target relied entirely on reusable crockery and cup systems. With the legislated rollout of FOGO bins across NSW hospitality businesses beginning from 2026, venues are behind in removing organic waste from their landfill stream.

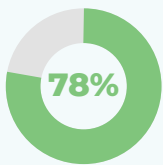
## Waste Recommendations

- Introduce organics bins at food-serving venues.
- Conduct quarterly waste audits to ensure waste is being correctly disposed of and collection numbers are appropriate.
- Phase out single-use plastics and compostables where reusables are viable.
- Explore potential for shared reusable cup and crockery infrastructure in music precincts or hubs.
- Opt for NSW Return and Earn Container Deposit Scheme collections and use additional revenue to fund other sustainability interventions.
- Educate staff, management and audiences on best-practice waste management practices and emerging regulatory shifts.
- Provide clear guidance on waste sorting for staff and patrons.

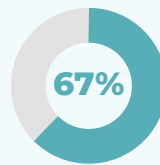


# WATER FINDINGS

## WORKING WELL

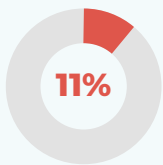


venues have  
**dual flush toilets**

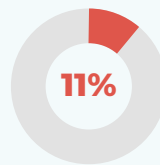


have **low-flow taps**

## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



have a water use  
**policy to monitor for leaks**



have a **rainwater tank**

Water efficiency is an area where most venues have made some progress, largely through the installation of efficient toilet and tap fixtures. However, very few have implemented systems to monitor usage or detect leaks. This represents a missed opportunity as measures are often low-cost yet deliver significant environmental and economic savings.



## Water Recommendations

- Encourage venues to adopt water monitoring and leak detection policies.
- Develop venue-specific water management plans.
- Install water tanks where viable.

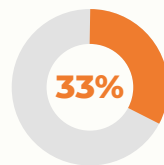


# FIRST NATIONS FINDINGS

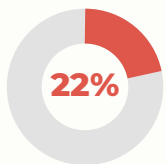
## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



provide Acknowledgement of Country **guidance to staff and visiting performers**



have **visible signage** acknowledging country



have a **personal relationship** with a local Elder



include **First Nations artists** in **playlists** between bands

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been caring for Country and its land, water and skies for over 60,000 years<sup>8</sup>. They know how to care for Country best, so to address the environmental and climate crisis, we need to ensure their voices are listened to and amplified in our fight for the living planet.

While some venues are taking steps to include First Nations voices, these actions are often ad-hoc rather than embedded in policy. There is a clear opportunity for venues to lead by example and embed cultural respect and recognition into day-to-day operations.

This includes not only acknowledging Country but also building long-term relationships and supporting First Nations artists, staff, and community members in meaningful ways.

## First Nations Recommendations

- Provide guidance to touring performers on how to conduct a local Acknowledgement of Country.
- Venue managers should endeavour to build genuine, open and long-term relationships with local Elders and community members.
- Provide cultural competency training for staff.
- Include First Nations voices in programming, governance, and planning.

# GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

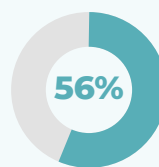
Many venues are already contributing to social and environmental causes through in-kind venue hire or donations. However, these contributions are often informal and undocumented. By formalising commitments through clear policies, venues can ensure these efforts are sustained over time and are consistently communicated to audiences, artists, and partners.

The Green Music Australia Green Venue Certification scheme did not assess accessibility, as Access Arts concurrently piloted their accessibility venue program Access All Areas during this period.

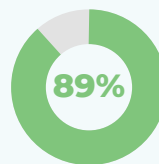
## Operating Recommendations

- Develop and publish sustainability and DEI plans and policies.
- Transition to ethical banking and procurement practices.
- Track and report on environmental and social contributions.
- Embed sustainability budget into staff roles and responsibilities.

### WORKING WELL

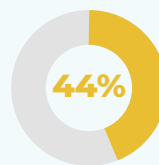


have **contributed cash** to environmental and/or social causes

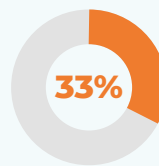


have **contributed in-kind** to environmental and/or social causes

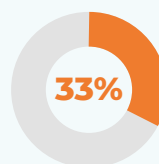
### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



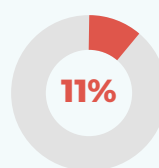
have **sustainable procurement policy**



have a **diversity, equity and inclusion policy**



have a **sustainability policy / sustainable action plan**

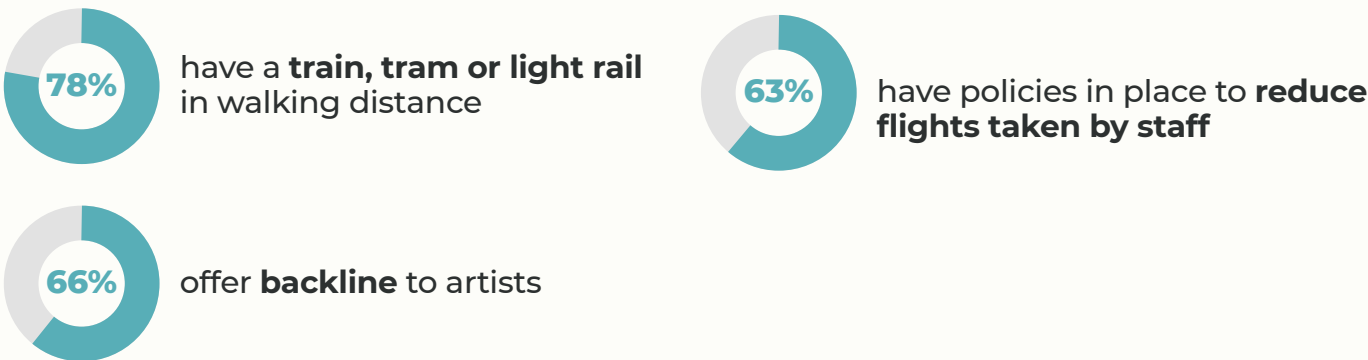


bank with an **ethical bank**



# TRANSPORT FINDINGS

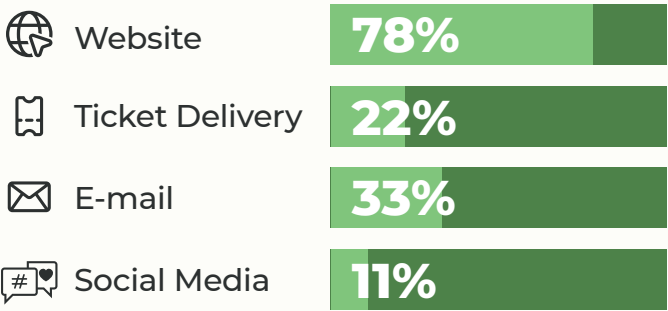
## WORKING WELL



## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



How venues share public transport information with attendees:



Transport emissions are a significant but often overlooked part of a venue's footprint. While some venues are reducing artist-related travel emissions through shared backline, audience travel remains largely unaddressed.

As most venues (78%) are located near public transport, there is an opportunity to encourage more sustainable travel methods. However, uptake of public and active transport options requires better communication and incentives. A lack of regional and national touring can also lead to greater audience travel emissions with recent research on Australian music audiences found 31% of surveyed music fans travelled interstate for a gig<sup>9</sup>.

## Transport Recommendations

- Publicise and keep a well-maintained backline to help artists bring less gear and reduce their travel emissions.
- Track and report on audience travel patterns.
- Promote public and active transport options.
- Provide secure bike parking and end-of-trip facilities.
- Offer incentives for low-emissions travel (e.g. discounts, priority entry).





# PROCUREMENT FINDINGS

## Beverages

### WORKING WELL

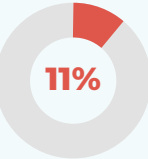


source **locally made** beverages



offer easily accessible water **refill stations**

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



sell wine in kegs



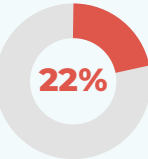
sell single-use water bottles



provide single-use water bottles to artists and crew



allow audiences to **BYOBottle** (but not all venues communicate this with audiences)



encourage a **green artist rider**



Reusable water bottle lids at Max Watts Venue

## Food

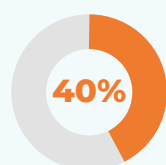
*Out of the participating venues which serve food...*

### WORKING WELL

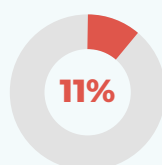


have minimum requirements for number of **vegan and vegetarian options available**

### ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



venues have **policy for locally grown** and produced ingredients



**use QR code to limit printing** and allow for changes based on food seasonality

## Merchandise & Uniforms

*% of venues who procure:*

	MERCHANDISE	UNIFORMS
organic cotton	25%	0%
recycled materials	0%	20%
fair labour practices	75%	60%
local manufacturer	25%	40%
local printer	75%	40%
green inks	0%	0%
sustainability accredited supplier	50%	60%



Procurement practices across the participating venues reveal a mixed picture. While there are encouraging signs of sustainable sourcing - particularly in beverage selection and the provision of water refill stations - other areas of procurement remain underdeveloped.

Of the five venues assessed which do provide food, very few source local produce. The use of QR code menus, which can reduce waste and paper production and support seasonal menu planning, is rare.

Local sourcing is more common with beverages, and 11% venues are experimenting with lower-waste formats like wine kegs that reduce glass bottle waste. However, the continued sale and distribution of single-use plastic water bottles, despite the universal

availability of refill stations, points to a disconnect between infrastructure and behaviour. This is compounded by inconsistent venue messaging around BYO bottle policies, which limits uptake and undermines the potential for waste reduction.

The procurement choices venues make, what they buy, who they buy it from, and how they serve it, have ripple effects across the supply chain and can benefit local communities.

## Procurement Recommendations

- Develop and implement sustainable procurement policies, with a focus on local, seasonal, and plant-based food and beverage options.
- Eliminate the sale of single-use plastic water bottles, join the [BYOBottle.org](https://BYOBottle.org) movement, and promote BYOBottle policies through clear, visible signage and staff training.
- Expand the use of digital menus to reduce printing and allow for flexible, seasonal offerings.
- Encourage the use of refillable kegged beverages and other low-waste formats.
- Encourage venues to work with one another on shared procurement and service models.

# VENUE PREPAREDNESS FOR REGULATORY SHIFTS

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The sustainability actions outlined in this report are not only best practice – they are increasingly becoming legal requirements. Over the next few years, live music venues in New South Wales will face a suite of new regulations that will reshape how they operate. These changes, driven by broader climate targets and waste reduction goals, will require venues to adapt quickly, often with limited resources.

Findings from this pilot suggest that most venues are not adequately prepared for the scale or pace of regulatory change. While there is strong interest in sustainability, the operational, financial, and technical capacity to act remains limited. This is particularly true for small and independent venues, which often lack access to dedicated sustainability staff or infrastructure.



*The Cat Empire at Anita's Theatre. photo credit: Anita's Theatre*



Alignment with Emissions Reduction Targets

NSW's Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 sets legally binding targets: a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030, 70% by 2035, and net zero by 2050<sup>10</sup>.

While venues are not directly regulated under the Act, they are expected to align

with its goals, especially if they receive public funding or work with government partners. In order to reduce emissions, venues will need to transition away from gas, improve energy efficiency, and adopt renewable energy and sustainable procurement sources.

Table 1: Emissions Reductions Targets across Federal and State/Territory Governments

Jurisdiction	2030 Target		2050 Target
Commonwealth Government <sup>11</sup>	43% below 2005 levels	—	Net zero
New South Wales <sup>10</sup>	50% below 2005 levels	70% below 2005 levels by 2035	Net zero
Australian Capital Territory <sup>12</sup>	65-75% below 2005 levels	90-95% below 1990 levels by 2040	Net zero
Northern Territory <sup>13</sup>	—	—	Net zero
Queensland <sup>14</sup>	30% below 2005 levels	75% below 2005 levels by 2035	Net zero
South Australia <sup>15</sup>	60% below 2005 levels	—	Net zero
Tasmania <sup>16</sup>	Net Zero (or lower)	—	Net Zero (or lower)
Victoria <sup>17</sup>	45-50% below 2005 levels	75-80% below 2005 levels by 2035	Net zero by 2045
Western Australia <sup>18</sup>	—	—	Net zero



Brunswick Picture House  
photo credit: supplied by venue

### **Mandatory Climate Reporting**

Mandatory Climate Reporting is set to become a defining feature of Australia's corporate and institutional landscape. Beginning in 2025, large organisations in Australia will be required to publicly disclose their climate-related risks, emissions, and transition plans<sup>4</sup>. While smaller venues may not be directly covered, the flow-on effects may be significant.

Venues that receive public funding or work with councils and arts bodies may be asked to report on their sustainability performance. Without systems in place to track energy use, emissions, and climate risks, venues may find themselves struggling to adapt or remain competitive against others with clear climate reporting.



**FOGO (Food Organics and Garden Organics) Legislation**

NSW will roll out mandatory organics separation across hospitality businesses from 2026 - 2030<sup>19</sup>. This staged rollout means venues over the weekly residual waste bin capacity must implement a food and organic waste collection service and ensure compliance with waste diversion targets by training staff to dispose of organic waste appropriately. Currently, only two of the five food-serving venues in this pilot have organic

waste systems in place. Without guidance and financial support, many venues will struggle to meet these obligations, risking fines or reputational damage.

Nationally, Australia's National Waste Policy Action Plan requires states and territories to halve food and garden organic (FOGO) waste sent to landfill by 2030<sup>19</sup>. With NSW leading legislation in commercial action, other states and territories are also beginning to implement food and organic waste strategies.

**Table 2: State / Territory Food and Organic Waste Targets in Australia**

Jurisdiction	Target / Key Actions
Commonwealth Government	Halve organic landfill waste by 2030 <sup>19</sup>
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phased rollout of FOGO bins for hospitality businesses between 2026-2030<sup>22</sup></li><li>• Halve organic landfill waste by 2030</li></ul>
Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Halve organic landfill waste by 2030<sup>20</sup></li><li>• Commercial organic waste identified as strategic priority for future legislation<sup>21</sup></li></ul>
Northern Territory	Halve organic landfill waste by 2030 <sup>23</sup>
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Halve organic landfill waste by 2030<sup>24</sup></li><li>• Divert 80 per cent of organic material generated from landfill by 2030<sup>24</sup></li></ul>
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zero avoidable waste to landfill by 2030<sup>25</sup></li><li>• 90% landfill diversion rate by 2025<sup>25</sup></li></ul>
Tasmania	Reduce organic waste sent to landfill by 25% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 <sup>26</sup>
Victoria	Halve organic landfill waste by 2030 <sup>27</sup>
Western Australia	Increase material recovery from waste to 75% by 2030 <sup>28</sup>

Single-Use Plastic Bans

Single-use plastic bans are expanding across the country, with NSW phasing out core items such as cutlery, tableware, and expanded polystyrene. Other states have gone further, banning plastic coffee cups, confetti, straws, plates and bowls.

These bans will require venues to rethink procurement, service models, and waste infrastructure, particularly during peak periods when single-use items are often reintroduced due to space or staffing constraints.

Table 3: Single Use Plastic Product Bans Across States & Territories

Product Bans	ACT <sup>29</sup>	NSW <sup>30</sup>	NT	QLD <sup>31</sup>	SA <sup>32</sup>	TAS <sup>33</sup>	VIC <sup>34</sup>	WA <sup>35</sup>
Plastic Confetti	—	—	—	—	✓	—	—	—
Plastic Cutlery	✓	✓	—	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓
Expanded Polystyrene Food & Drink Containers	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓
Plastic coffee cups and lids (non-compostable)	—	—	—	—	✓	🕒	—	✓
Plastic cold drink cups & lids (non-compostable)	—	🕒	—	—	✓	🕒	—	✓
Plastic Plates and Bowls	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓
Plastic Straws	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓	🕒	✓	✓

✓ Legislated      🕒 Proposed



# INDUSTRY & GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from this pilot program highlight both the readiness and the vulnerability of live music venues in New South Wales. While many venues are taking meaningful steps toward sustainability, the sector remains under-resourced and exposed to a rapidly changing regulatory and environmental landscape. To ensure venues can continue to thrive while meeting climate and policy obligations, coordinated support is needed across government, industry, and funding bodies.

## 1 *Deepen Investment in Energy Efficiency and Electrification.*

Energy use remains a significant source of emissions for live music venues, but also the area with great potential for cost savings and emissions reductions. While recent investments by Sound NSW are commendable, they represent only a fraction of what is needed. Targeted funding for energy audits, solar installation, HVAC upgrades, and electrification (particularly the transition away from gas) will be essential to help venues meet net zero targets and reduce operating costs.

## 2 *Commission Sector-Wide Reporting on Climate Preparedness.*

There is a clear need for deeper analysis of how venues are positioned to respond to upcoming regulatory changes – including mandatory climate reporting, FOGO legislation, and single-use plastic bans. Green Music Australia is well-placed to lead this work, building on its existing certification and audit frameworks. A sector-wide report would help identify gaps, inform policy, and guide future investment.



*The Bondi Pavilion with solar*

### **3 Support Venue Certification and Capacity Building.**

Venue certification programs offer a structured pathway for venues to understand their environmental impact and identify opportunities for improvement. Expanding access to Green Music Australia's certification – particularly for small and regional venues – will help build sector-wide capacity and ensure that sustainability becomes embedded in day-to-day operations. Our Venue Certification pilot found that the process alone of completing the certification educated venue staff on best practice, with some venues implementing their learnings immediately. Certification also provides venues with a credible framework to communicate their efforts to audiences, funders, and partners.

### **4 Integrate Climate Action into Arts and Culture Strategies.**

Despite growing awareness of climate risks, most national and state arts strategies do not yet include climate adaptation or mitigation as core priorities. This omission leaves the live music sector exposed and unsupported. Governments must ensure that climate action and resilience is embedded in cultural policy, funding criteria, and strategic planning. This includes recognising the unique vulnerabilities of live music venues and festivals, and providing tailored support to help them transition to a low-carbon future and adapt.

### **5 Replicate Learnings with Broader Arts and Cultural Venues.**

Music venues are the cultural centres of our communities, and can be beacons of hope, modelling new ways of operating that are more sustainable.

Many of the recommendations and research from this project will be relevant to all kinds of venues: arts centres, galleries, museums, neighbourhood and community centres.

Newly established peak body Creative Climate - a consortium of arts led organisations including Green Music Australia are supporting the arts and culture sector to mobilise and take action with access to tools, resources and free programs. Greater support to research and share learnings across disciplines will benefit all artists, workers and communities.



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