

## **Attachment D**

**Example Code of Practice for Busking –  
“Sydney Busking Code”**

## The Sydney Busking Code (example for public consultation purposes)

Sydney has a thriving busking culture and is home to some of the most lucrative busking pitches in the country. We welcome street performers from across Australia and the world to share their performances on Sydney streets alongside our local talent.

We, the Buskers of Sydney:

- ❖ Recognise and respect that we perform on Gadigal Land. We share our busking spaces with practitioners of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture who experience and share their cultural heritage through dance, song and storytelling.
- ❖ Are ambassadors for the cultural life of Sydney and its diverse, harmonious communities.
- ❖ Perform in public places to contribute something positive to those spaces. If our performance is having a negative effect on anybody, we do our best to remedy it.
- ❖ Look out for each other, welcome newcomers, and keep fellow buskers in check if they're over-stepping the expectations and obligations of buskers in Sydney.
- ❖ Work in cooperation with each other, local government and the police to manage any issues that arise from a busker's performance or behaviour. We understand that the way we conduct ourselves may affect the reputation and livelihood of all buskers in Sydney.
- ❖ Have a right and an opportunity to actively engage in monitoring and improving busking regulations and busking culture in Sydney.

The Busking Code is our guide to busker etiquette and pitch sharing arrangements in Sydney.

### The Basics

In Sydney, busking acts are grouped in three categories. Each category has its own set of performance conditions.

If your act does not:

- need more than 2m<sup>2</sup> performance space
- require an audience to gather, wait and watch
- use "naturally loud" instruments such as drums, bagpipes, pan pipes or brass instruments
- use higher risk materials or equipment like fire or sharp objects

You have a Low Impact act and may busk for up to 2 hours per location per day.

If your act:

- needs more than 2m<sup>2</sup> performance space; or
- encourages an audience to gather, wait and watch; or
- uses "naturally loud" instruments such as drums, bagpipes, pan pipes or brass instruments; or
- uses higher risk materials or equipment like fire or sharp objects; or
- features 5 or more performers

You have a High Impact act and may busk for up to 1 hour per location per day. You'll need to speak to the City of Sydney about attending an act assessment before you can get a permit to busk.

High Impact acts often need more space, hence there are less places where they can perform. Keeping acts to 1 hour duration provides more performers with access to these limited larger performance spaces and breaks up the impact of loud or large acts on neighbours, pedestrians and the public.

If your act:

- is quiet, non-amplified and non-musical, and
- involves creating a work of art continuously over a long period of time such as pavement art or durational performance art

You have an Extended Duration act. As long as your pitch isn't restricting other people from using the area around you, you can perform for up to 8 hours per location per day.

### **Where to busk**

You can establish a busking pitch on any public land in Sydney that meets these criteria:

- there is enough open space for you to conduct your performance plus a further two metres for pedestrian flow on at least two sides of your pitch;
- the site is not being used by an approved event or gathering;
- you are 100 metres from another busker or an approved event or gathering;
- your pitch and your audience does not block access to the entry or exit of any building, street or carpark; and
- if the location is a Special Busking Site with set pitches and a booking or queuing system, you observe the conditions of the site (see Special Busking Sites below).

### **Making and managing your pitch**

The pitch is your stage, keep it looking clean, well laid-out and professionally put together.

Minimise clutter or any unnecessary items that might be a trip hazard.

For Low Impact Acts, keep your equipment near to you and encourage your audience to gather close.

For High Impact Acts, consider laying a rope on the ground or drawing a chalk circle to show the audience where you want them to gather. You want them to be as close as they can be, while still safely outside your performance area.

For Pavement Artists, use a chalk that is entirely removable by water or draw onto a removable canvas that you lay over the pavement. Make sure your materials aren't slippery and your canvas isn't a trip hazard by fixing it to the ground with a tape that does not leave behind an adhesive residue.

### **Content of your Act**

Sydney buskers are ambassadors for the cultural life of the city and the values we celebrate: diversity, generosity, respect and inclusion. Buskers do not tease, humiliate or harass anyone.

Sydney buskers are some of the best in the world. We have innovative, original, expertly performed acts. We have a varied repertoire and never repeat the same material during a set. If you don't have enough content to fill your time at a pitch without repeating anything, then trim your set to the amount of material you have and move to another pitch.

## **Volume**

Performing too loudly can negatively affect neighbouring homes and businesses and it can drive your audience away. Buskers who play too loudly earn less money as crowds keep a distance from the performance. Pushing your audience away from you with high volume also adds to congestion and crowding in pedestrian zones, so people are less likely to hang around and watch your performance.

Ensuring that your performance cannot be heard at 50 metres from your pitch is a courtesy to other buskers. As busking pitches can be a minimum of 100 metres apart, the sound of your act should not travel more than 50 metres where it may begin to effect another busker's performance.

The following are guides to help you monitor if your act is at the right volume. Be aware that an authorised person from the local council or police can tell you to lower your volume at any time and you need to follow their instruction.

- If you cannot hear any background noise during your performance, you are playing too loud.
- If your audience are gathering more than 3 metres from you, you are playing too loud.
- If you can see that your audience is shouting to speak to each other, turn it down.
- If your performance can be heard 50 metres from your pitch, you're playing too loud. Get a friend or fellow busker to walk 50-60 paces from your performance and see if they can still hear you. If they can, turn it down.
- If you find that no one is paying you any tips, try reducing your volume and see if people become more comfortable approaching you.
- If somebody living or working inside a building near where you are performing complains that they can hear your performance over their own conversation, you are playing too loud. Remember, you can reach a compromise. You don't have to be silenced if a neighbour is bothered by your act, but you do need to accommodate their concerns. Keeping good relations with the neighbours is good for all buskers and busking culture in Sydney.

## **Flammable Materials**

If you use flammable materials, liquids or gasses in your act:

- Always define the boundary of your performance space using a rope or similar demarcation. The audience should be at least two metres from you on all sides.
- Keep a Work Cover approved Fire Blanket and a wet towel at hand and within reach
- Never carry more than 2 litres of flammable liquids with you. Mark the container with the words "HIGHLY FLAMMABLE" on all sides, along with the name of the combustible such as "Kerosene".
- Always keep your fuel container securely shut.
- Take all measures to prevent fuel from dripping on the ground. If it does, clean it up immediately.

## **Sales**

The sale of buskers' own music, video, artwork or merchandise is encouraged in Sydney, but it has to be supplementary to your performance. You can't spruik your products or get someone else to sell them on your behalf. You are at a busking pitch to busk not to conduct a market stall, if somebody happens to approach you to buy your music or merch, it's a bonus.

## **Special Busking Sites**

Special Busking Sites have additional conditions or operating systems. These are self-managed by the buskers who use the pitches and are overseen by City Rangers and City of Sydney staff.

### **MARTIN PLACE**

- There are six pitches in Martin Place
  1. The eastern side of the George Street intersection, facing George St (Low Impact only)
  2. The eastern side of the Pitt Street intersection, facing Pitt Street
  3. In the Mall between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Street
  4. In the Mall between Phillip Street and Elizabeth Street
  5. The eastern side of the Phillip Street intersection, facing Phillip Street (Low Impact only)
  6. The western side of the Macquarie Street intersection (non-musical only)
- Buskers may perform once per day in any of these locations.
- All acts in all six pitches are limited to a 45 minute duration between 10am and 4pm Monday – Friday.

### **PITT STREET MALL**

- There are three pitches in Pitt Street Mall:
  1. North, near the King Street intersection.
  2. Middle, half way between North and South pitches, near Mid City Centre.
  3. South, near the Market Street intersection under the Westfield sky-bridge.
- The Northern and Southern pitches are for Low Impact and High Impact Acts only
- Buskers may perform in the Northern and Southern pitches for a maximum of one hour, per pitch, per day
- Low Impact Acts may not play the same pitch on consecutive days
- High Impact Acts may not play directly after another High Impact Act (ie, not back-to-back)
- The Middle Pitch is for Extended Duration Acts only
- The Middle Pitch is allocated on a first-in basis, but cannot be used by the same busker on consecutive days.

**GEORGE STREET LIGHTRAIL CORRIDOR**

TBC. Pitches and conditions to be developed in consultation with businesses and buskers.

**QUEEN VICTORIA BUILDING**

The southern forecourt of the QVB may be occupied by one Extended Duration Act and either one Low Impact Act or one High Impact Act at any one time.

**BROADWAY SHOPPING CENTRE**

The Bay Street entrance to the Broadway Shopping Centre is for Low Impact Acts only.

Buskers may perform for up to one hour per day.

SAMPLE