



ANNUAL REPORT

# NSW Independent Brewers Action Plan

## A thriving future for NSW Independent Brewers

To support this evolving industry and ensure its continued growth, the NSW Government and Independent Brewers Association (IBA) collaborated to develop the *NSW Independent Brewers Action Plan*. The Independent Brewers Working Group was established to help realise the aims of the Action Plan and create new opportunities for the industry. This document provides a summary of the highlights and key achievements of the Working Group in its first year and is supported by other initiatives in the Independent Brewers Action Plan.

The \$600 million NSW independent brewing sector is fast growing, innovative and on trend. It's attracting a new workforce with an interest in food technology, customer service and unique tasting experiences.

NSW's independent brewers are taking advantage of a worldwide trend towards artisan products that are high quality, local and natural. Together with an emerging demand for authentic, specialised experiences, they are attracting new customers and tourists.

Brewers were hard hit by the pandemic, particularly those based in regional NSW who rely on tourism

and tap-room trade. Some pivoted to produce hand sanitiser, temporarily moved online, or expanded their product offering to survive. Support from the NSW Government was a welcome relief and crucial in helping brewers navigate the devastating impacts on the industry.

The industry is now poised for growth, with opportunities to expand domestically, as well as crack international markets. NSW is leading the way, looking at innovative new flavours, utilising new techniques and technologies and positioning itself as an Asia-Pacific centre of excellence for craft beer.

### NSW independent brewers industry at a glance



**Almost 200** breweries, brew pubs and contract brewers operating across the State.



**2,122 direct and 8,112 indirect jobs** supported by the independent brewing industry in 2019-20.



**\$594 million** direct and indirect economic impact in NSW.



**Two-thirds** located in regional and rural NSW.

## Supporting NSW's independent brewers

Since its formation, the Independent Brewers Working Group has helped the industry survive, thrive and cope by addressing challenges specific to independent brewers.

In its first 12 months Working Group members have:

- connected brewers with Destination NSW and other organisations to better showcase their brewing experiences
- investigated NSW heritage barley lines with the goal of creating a unique NSW flavour
- advocated to the Commonwealth for reduced excise duty
- championed policy and regulatory changes including special drink on-premises authorisation, extending trading hours and pop-up licences
- provided crisis funding, fee waivers and grant support.

### CASE STUDY

#### Nomad Brewing

Nomad Brewing, based in Sydney's Northern Beaches, had to let go of two of their seven full-time staff and reduce their remaining staff down to two days per week during the COVID-19 crisis after losing 60% of their customer base. Facing uncertainty about their future, and wanting to help their community, Nomad pivoted to manufacture hand sanitiser. They took advantage of NSW Government assistance, such as free IBA membership for NSW brewers and excise duty freezes, to start their recovery and are now looking forward to an optimistic future as demand returns to near normal.



### CASE STUDY

#### Dangerous Ales

Milton brewer, Dangerous Ales, commenced operations in December 2019 alongside The Milton Hotel. Their first 12 months in operation was heavily impacted by bushfires and COVID-19 with staff reductions, purchase of on-site canning equipment, and sales via The Milton Hotel's takeaway window required to keep things afloat. Summer sales in 2020/21 were down by about 30% due to ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks, but with the help of Job Keeper, IBA membership and Destination NSW, Dangerous Ales is flourishing. They now have two staff enrolled in the TAFE NSW 2020 Certificate III in Food Processing (Micro Brewing), subsidised by the NSW Smart & Skilled program, and they hope to employ up to six new staff and expand into a bigger brewery within the next 18 months.

## Major achievements



**9 Food, Wine and Ale Trials, and Inner West Ale Trail developed in partnership with IBA to provide inspiration for travellers (visit [sydney.com](http://sydney.com) and [visitnsw.com](http://visitnsw.com)).**

- Port To Port: Newcastle, Port Stephens & Port Macquarie
- Haven to Highlands: Kiama, Shoalhaven & Southern Highlands
- Capital to the Coast: Canberra District & South Coast
- Northern Exposure: Northern Rivers & The Tweed
- On the Grower's Path: Hawkesbury & Mudgee
- Valleys & Vines: Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Batlow, Tumbarumba, Junee & Coolamon
- Blue to Orange: Blue Mountains & Orange
- Taste of Sydney: Western Sydney, Inner West, City Centre & Northern Beaches
- Voyage to the Valley: Hawkesbury, Central Coast & Hunter Valley



**10% increase in independent brewers** listing their venues and visitor experiences via the Destination NSW Get Connected program.



**Temporary fee waiver** for small suppliers in the NSW Container Deposit Scheme.



**Liquor Amendment (COVID-19 and Managed Alcohol Program) Regulation 2020 reforms** to assist microbreweries and small distilleries via special regulations and licenses.



**\$60,000 grant** to support BrewCon, the annual IBA conference and **\$10,000 prize** for the NSW Indie Brewer of the Year Award to support business development activities.



**\$135,000 in membership funding** to support around 100 IBA existing and new members in 2020.



**\$17 million COVID-response assistance** in liquor licence fee waivers and trading hours risk loading savings.





Image courtesy of Independent Brewers Association.

## A vibrant future

This Action Plan will help all independent NSW brewers, their employees and communities. It will encourage further industry development and job creation. To find out more:



[www.business.nsw.gov.au/independentbrewers](http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/independentbrewers)



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