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Melbourne curfew and lockdown

Transcript: Innes Willox on Nine network Today show

With Allison Langdon and David Campbell

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LANGDON: Innes let's start with really good stuff: how great is it to see people out and about at 11:59 p.m.

WILLOX: Well, it's fantastic Ally that people were able to get out. There was an attempt to keep people home obviously with the curfew from nine o'clock last night. It was a little bit like Rip Van Winkle came to town at nine o'clock and made everyone go to sleep. And then Peter Pan came and spread the fairy dust at 11:59 and we could all get up and go out and enjoy the new-found freedoms. It's been a long slow crawl to Freedom. Still got a long way to go yet. But today is a good day.

It's a good step, but it's been marked with a lot of inconsistencies, strange decisions, arbitrary decisions on the way through. And as you just mentioned, a lot of businesses still aren't open or able to open, so still a fair way to go. But today's a good day. The short sharp seven-day lockdown turned into a short sharp, 77-day lockdown and hopefully this will be the end of it.

CAMPBELL: Like you were just mentioning then, how would you describe the handling of the reopening for businesses out there?

WILLOX: Well, it's been pretty chaotic David to be quite honest. You have bizarre situations that are going on. A lot of inconsistencies. Among my many favourites of course, are that retail aren't able to open, but pubs and restaurants are in limited capacity and retailers are meant to put their wares out on the street on sort of trestle tables and turn into market stalls, but you know, that's not going to help, this weekend a lot of is rain forecast. So it's a very slow opening that we're seeing. I mean, another sort of strange thing is that hairdressers in Regional Victoria can cut the hair of unvaccinated people but in Melbourne hairdressers can't cut the hair of unvaccinated people. There's just inconsistencies all over the place. It's a slow opening. It's not happening as it did say in Sydney and New South Wales. So it's a much slower progress that we're seeing. So that just means that the economic pain will be around at least for another week and we would hope that the State Government announces very quickly that we will open next Friday for the long weekend, whether we're at 80% or not, because we'll be so close to that. Business needs certainty. It needs time to open up and we can't just have a decision made one day and then business be told it can operate the next. It just doesn't work like that.

LANGDON: Innes you are right. It is slower than Sydney. Part of that argument has been that you're seeing far more cases than what New South Wales has at that same time, but you're getting there, right? And just looking at that vision last night, people were busting to get out. We're now hearing International or quarantine-free international travellers coming. Once you get to this point between 70 and 80% It starts to look pretty good. Doesn't it?

WILLOX: Oh, for sure Ally. It's getting better every day and people are turning out to be vaccinated and that's really turning up the speed of the opening. And that's a really positive thing. The quicker we can get back on our feet the better. The opening of our international borders is going to be a very positive thing. Sydney has announced 1 November. You can expect Melbourne will announce the same. Where Sydney goes, Melbourne follows. That seems to be the pattern here and look, the cold hard reality is that Don Perrottet is taking Dan Andrews to places that he quite frankly didn't want to go but has no choice but to now follow. And the other states will have to tag along. That's just what's going to happen here. So the quicker we can get the economy opened again the quicker those billion dollar losses that the economy is suffering every week will be a thing of the past and hopefully business can get back up on its feet again in time for Christmas and we can all have a great end of year.

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