

# Enjoying the gold rush

**Rod Bennett**  
ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

**DEE** Why singer/songwriter Allan Caswell said he was feeling good despite high level partying after collecting a Golden Guitar at this year's Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Caswell won the Vocal Collaboration of the Year award with Neutral Bay singer/songwriter Drew McAlister on Saturday night in Tamworth.

"This is my sixth Golden Guitar but it's been 19 years since the last - it meant the most to me," he said.

"It's Drew's first. I think he's going to win heaps more in his career."

What's more, their song *A Little Bit Of Country In Us All* was produced by Balgowlah's Al Craig.

Caswell won five Golden Guitar awards in the 1980s but said Saturday's win held special significance.

He said the writing and recording of songs had been a team effort "the whole time" between himself, McAlister and Craig.

"It's better to walk into the after-party holding a Golden Guitar than to walk in not holding one," he said.

Craig envisaged the win would translate to a boost in sales for the album *Al's Bar & Grill*, on which the song appears.



Drew McAlister, Al Craig and Allan Caswell with their Tamworth Country Music Festival awards.  
Picture: SIMON DEAN

# Ferry boss probe: jobs for boys

**Andrew Tillet**  
STATE PARLIAMENT REPORTER

CLAIMS of nepotism surrounding Sydney Ferries boss Geoff Smith have been referred to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Rear-Admiral Smith has come under fire after three family members - his son, stepson and a nephew - were given summer jobs with the authority.

The trio were hired as crowd controllers at Circular Quay and Manly wharves during the busy holiday period. The jobs finished on Sunday.

According to weekend reports, Sydney Ferries asked its staff in an internal memo to invite friends and family members to apply for 55 casual positions.

The report said 110 applicants missed out but Mr Smith's family was among those hired.

The state's most senior public servant, Premier's Department's director-general Col Gellatly, referred the matter to the corruption

watchdog yesterday for review following a meeting with Assistant Transport Minister Eric Roozendaal.

Mr Roozendaal said the casuals had been hired in line with Sydney Ferries' employment policy but promised future jobs would be advertised.

"It's quite clear the public demands a higher standard of transparency and the employment policy needs to be updated," he said.

Despite calls for Mr Smith to step down while ICAC looks at the case, a Sydney Ferries spokesman said Rear-Admiral Smith would remain at work.

"Sydney Ferries and its CEO Geoff Smith will co-operate fully with the independent review being conducted by the ICAC," the spokesman said.

Opposition transport spokeswoman Gladys Berejiklian said Mr Roozendaal was only a part-time transport minister and had been distracted by his roads portfolio.

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