



Prostitution Licensing Authority
Queensland Government

Statement of Affairs 2008

Issued in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*

Reviewed Annually

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the structure, functions and operation of the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA). It also contains information related to the community's right of access to documents held by the PLA.

Structure and function

The PLA is a statutory body established by the *Prostitution Act 1999*. The PLA is governed by an eight-member board appointed by the Governor-in-Council under the Prostitution Act, and supported by staff headed by the Executive Director. The PLA reports to the Minister for Police and the Parliament.

In broad terms the PLA is responsible for implementing the Prostitution Act. The core business of the PLA is to decide applications for brothel licences and managers' certificates. The Prostitution Act outlines a range of other functions the PLA fulfils with regard to prostitution regulation in Queensland.

Effects of PLA activities on the community

PLA activities contribute significantly to the regulation of prostitution in Queensland, leading to increased health and safety for sex workers and improved health in the wider community.

All applicants for brothel licences and approved managers' certificates are subject to exhaustive and intensive personal and financial probity checking. The decision to grant or reject brothel licence and approved manager certificate applications ensures that only suitable people are in control of licensed brothels. The compliance and disciplinary functions of the PLA ensure that high standards of sexual health, workplace health and safety and hygiene are maintained in licensed brothels.

The investigation of applications for a brothel licence or manager's certificate can affect individuals in that the PLA requires applicants to provide us with information relevant to the application. If an applicant is rejected, they will not be able to legally exert any control or influence over a licensed brothel in the state.

The PLA is not a prosecuting authority. Where our inquiries reveal a criminal offence or an offence under the Prostitution Act, we refer the incident to an appropriate prosecuting authority such as the Queensland Police Service for such proceedings as they consider are warranted in the circumstances.

Community participation in PLA policy formulation

While there is no formal mechanism to provide for the participation of individuals in the formulation of PLA policies, we welcome feedback from the community about our policies and about how we exercise our functions. The PLA will consider these views, and may correspond with individuals or groups about specific policies, but we are not obliged to do so.

From time to time, the PLA will invite stakeholder feedback. For example, in 2007-08, the PLA distributed its draft Prostitution Advertising Guidelines to key stakeholders and invited submissions. Stakeholder feedback was important in influencing the content and scope of the

guidelines. The PLA may also use its newsletter, *In Touch*, to inform and invite reader feedback.

Members of the community or staff of public agencies are free to contact the PLA by telephone, fax or email (see contact details below).

Documents held by the PLA

Documents held by the PLA can be divided into three broad categories:

Library holdings

- Monographs
- Subscriptions
- Loose leaf collection
- Audio-visual material
- News clippings.

These documents are available for inspection at the PLA free of charge. Arrangements can be made to view these documents in the PLA's library by contacting the PLA by telephone, fax or email.

General documents

- Records relating to brothel licence and manager's certificate applications
- Records relating to licensed brothels
- Financial records, annual budget papers and other administrative records
- Human resource records such as personal interest declarations, pay or leave records and work appraisal records relating to PLA staff
- Information held on various databases
- Minutes and records of PLA meetings and procedures
- The Finance and Administration Manual.

The majority of the general documents collected or produced by the PLA are sensitive documents and the Prostitution Act prevents their disclosure. Section 137 of the Prostitution Act states that the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* does not apply to a document given to or produced by the PLA for the purposes of the Prostitution Act.

Public documents

- *Handbook for Approved Managers of Licensed Brothels*
- PLA Annual reports
- Client Service Charter
- PLA newsletter, *In Touch*
- Fact sheets
- The PLA Privacy Plan
- The PLA Strategic Plan
- The PLA Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Guidelines about the approved form for advertisements for prostitution
- The Licence and Certificate Register (a person may inspect the register and, on payment of a fee, take extracts or copies of particulars in the register).

Apart from the Licence and Certificate Register, these public documents are available from the PLA free of charge and can be obtained by making contact with the PLA by telephone, fax or email. Some of these documents are also available on the PLA website www.pla.qld.gov.au. You may also be able to find our publications at libraries throughout the State.

Bodies established to advise the PLA

The PLA is not advised by a board, council or committee.

Accessing and seeking amendment to PLA documents

Access to PLA public documents may be obtained by contacting the PLA by telephone, fax or email or through the PLA website www.pla.qld.gov.au.

The Prostitution Act requires any applicant for a brothel licence or manager's certificate to notify the PLA within 10 days after becoming aware of any change in information they have provided to the PLA. Notification must be made in writing.

The Freedom of Information Act does not apply to documents given to or produced by the PLA for the purposes of the Prostitution Act.

All correspondence relating to applications under the Freedom of Information Act should be made to the Executive Director of the PLA and lodged personally at the Office of the PLA, by post or by fax (see below for contact details). An application should:

- Identify the information or document to which the application refers
- Provide as much detail as possible about the information or document
- Indicate the type of access required, e.g. supply of copies or personal inspection
- Include a written authority if another person or organisation is requesting access to documents on your behalf.

Photocopying charges may apply for each A4 size page.

Contacting the PLA

Street address:
Level 3, 5 Gardner Close
MILTON QLD 4064

Postal address:
GPO Box 3196
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Telephone: 07 3858 9500
Fax: 07 3876 3641
E-mail: plaadmin@iprimus.com.au

Web site: www.pla.qld.gov.au