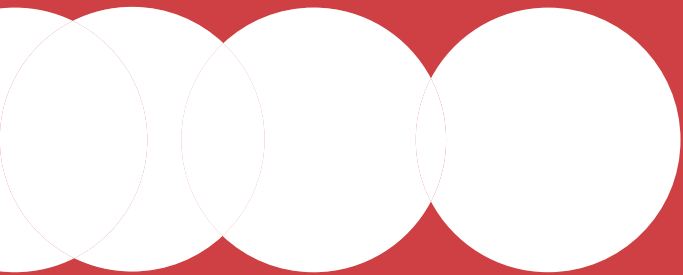


 **message** from the chair



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→ The PLA achieved another milestone on 30 June 2004. It marked the end of four years of regulation and control of prostitution in Queensland. It also ushered in the prospect of robust community debate about the operation and effectiveness of the Act so far.

The Act required the Crime and Misconduct Commission (CMC) to review the effectiveness of the legislation after three years of operation. That review has been in progress for some time now and is continuing and the CMC report to the Parliament is expected in the near future. The several stakeholders in the sex industry view the report as the opportunity to engage in the inevitable community debate which will follow its publication.

Public debate about the regulation and control of prostitution in any community will always be attended with strongly held and competing views. That is healthy. What is more important is that such debate be properly informed.

The year under review has seen the progress of the Authority's research project into the sex industry carried out in association with the University of Queensland (UQ) and the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). The result of that professionally generated research is now available and will enhance the debate. It is to be hoped that as a result of this work the debate will be better informed.

An amendment of the Act in December 2003 enlarged the functions of the Authority and altered its composition. It was disappointing that the then Minister chose not to consult with the Authority in relation to these important issues. Those concerns however, have in some respects been relieved by the

current Minister's recent appointment of two new members to the Authority – Ms Lynette Palmen AM and Ms Annette Murphy. Lyn and Annette have very quickly demonstrated their worth as Authority members and they have been warmly welcomed by their Authority colleagues and staff for their valued contribution.

Finally, let me place on record the Authority's appreciation of the support given to it by the current Minister, the Honourable Judy Spence MP. We also recognise and value the assistance of the various departmental officers in the Queensland Police Service (QPS), Queensland Health and the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) who have so professionally supported and enhanced the work of the Authority. Again we say how much we value the assistance and support of Ms Cheryl Matthews and our other friends at SQWISI.

And how could we have ever coped without the dedication and committed professionalism of our small staff so ably led by the registrar, Ms Margaret Isaac – to you all a very sincere thank you.

WJ Carter QC
Chair



registrar's report

→ Our fourth year has passed and our knowledge of the sex industry has further increased. There's a little known phrase that goes "there runs a deep and wide river of information and opinion fed by many springs ..." which conveys, to a great extent, the environment within which the PLA operates.

The commonly advocated function of the PLA staff is to provide usable knowledge to the Authority and to this end I must thank those agencies that have willingly and proactively continued to engage in consultation and provide information that assists our decision making. While the QPS, Queensland Health and the DIR continue to be an invaluable resource I must, in particular, write a special mention to SQWISI. While there were those who endeavoured to paralyse us in the early days SQWISI sought only to stimulate and inform. As a non-government agency they were able to clarify and articulate their needs and wherever possible join in the policy making process. It is far from obvious how to get more people to have better ideas but a strengthened competition of ideas is a core element in improving an organisation's capacity for rational

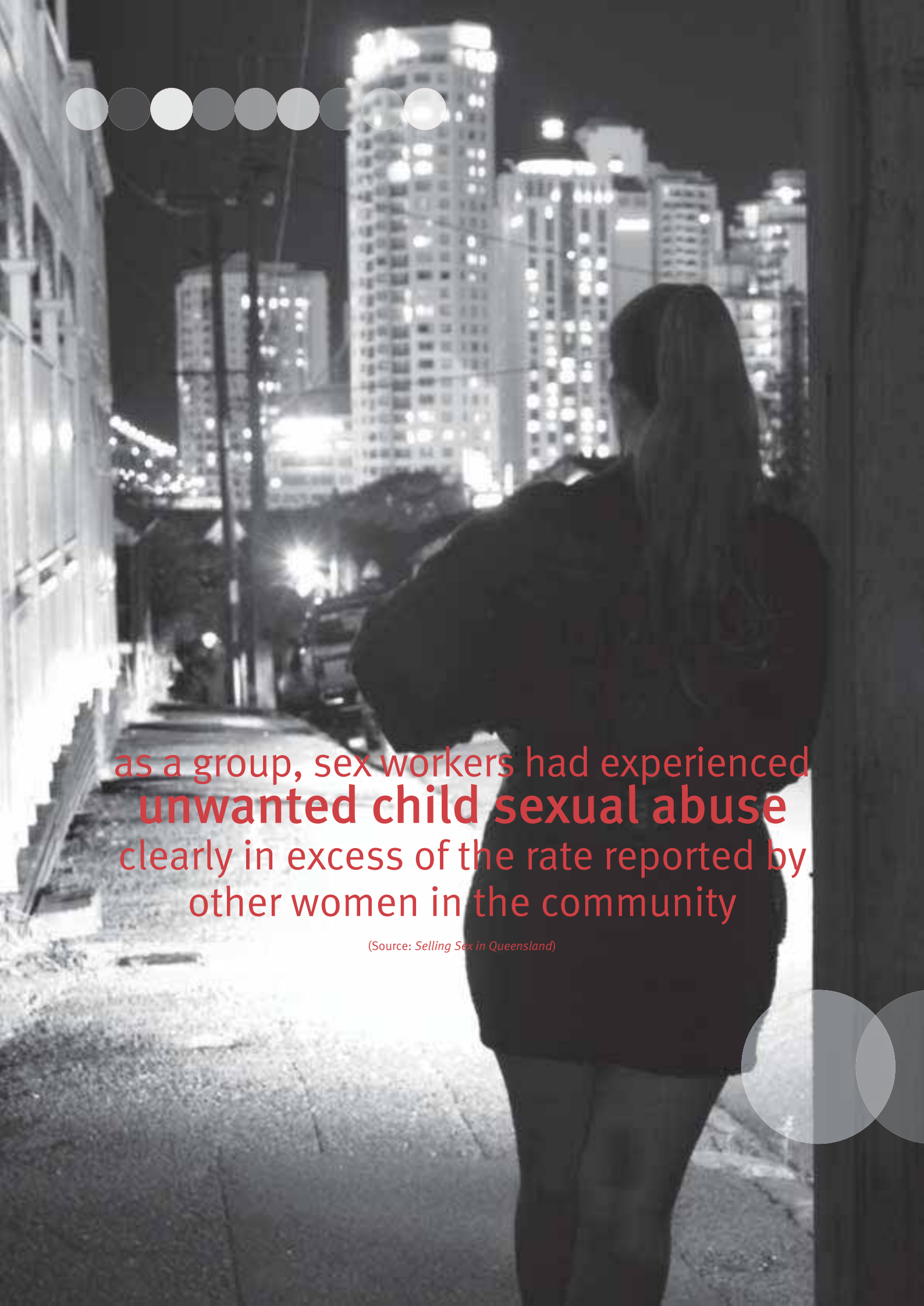
decision making. SQWISI are committed to win themselves an influential role.

Like all agencies it comes as a pleasant and rare surprise to be singled out by an industry group in recognition of your agency's contribution and support. On 17 December 2003 the PLA were the recipients of a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of the valuable contribution and support to SQWISI. From this perspective our ability to identify and focus on those strategies that optimise the efficient and successful administration of the Act, which has always been our objective, is enhanced.

Our recent launch of the *Selling Sex in Queensland* report represents a significant achievement. It provides an objective and factual benchmark of Queensland's sex industry which will not only ensure a coherent and rational approach to the continued regulation of the licensed sex industry but importantly, will provide further understanding to the CMC in their review of the Act, which cannot be reproduced through analysis alone.

Margaret Isaac
Registrar





as a group, sex workers had experienced
unwanted child sexual abuse
clearly in excess of the rate reported by
other women in the community

(Source: Selling Sex in Queensland)

