



## Changing Your **Perspective**







# Our Corporate Governance Framework

## Appointment of PLA Members

PLA members are appointed by the Governor-in-Council, pursuant to the Act, for a period of not more than five years. A person is disqualified from continuing as a member of the PLA if the person:

- is an insolvent under administration
- is convicted of an indictable offence, an offence against the Act or a corresponding law
- becomes incapable of discharging the duties of a member because of physical or mental incapacity
- has an interest in a brothel.

## The Strategic Planning Cycle

This year we have reviewed our 2001-05 Strategic Plan in compliance with the Financial Management Standard 1997 and have presented the Plan to the Minister for Police for her consideration. The following documents are utilised by the PLA to support the Strategic Plan:

- a business plan to cover the 2004-05 financial year
- an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Resources Strategic Plan for the period 2001-05
- a Procurement Plan for the period 2001-05, which includes a Capital Acquisition Program.

The strategic planning cycle in place at the PLA is intended to achieve the following five goals:

1. to ensure an efficient and effective brothel licensing system to regulate prostitution in Queensland
2. to ensure licensed brothels are operating to best practice standards
3. to inform the public about prostitution in Queensland

4. to maintain strategic liaisons with key agencies
5. to provide a safe, fair and productive workplace at the PLA.

## Ethical and Professional Conduct

High standards of ethical conduct continue to be one of our major objectives. The Code of Conduct is our key means for directing staff in their ethical obligations. In view of the establishment of the compliance function and concern about the potential risks associated with compliance activities, the PLA conducted a review of the Code of Conduct in December 2002 and approved a revised version of the document. At the initiation of the PLA, the Code of Conduct was extensively reviewed by the CMC in 2003 and further amended after staff and the PLA were consulted. In line with requirements outlined in the Finance and Administration Manual (FAM), the Code of Conduct was again reviewed in 2004-05 following consultation with staff, the PLA, CMC, QPS and relevant industrial organisations.

An ongoing review of the FAM was completed during 2003-04. As the need arose during 2004-05, regular briefings on FAM procedures were provided to all PLA staff at their staff meetings.

To overcome any potential conflict of interest when considering licence and manager's certificate applications, we comply with guidelines established in our Probity Investigation Manual (PIM). The PIM identifies procedures to notify PLA members of the names of individuals associated with licence and certificate applications to ensure a transparent decision-making process.

## Risk Management

Under the former Protective Security Manual, the PLA established an Information Security Steering Committee (ISSC). After reviewing the Protective Security Manual we integrated the document into the FAM by creating two separate chapters – Security and Risk Management – and we reviewed the functions of the ISSC. Under the new Risk Management chapter of the FAM the newly named Risk Management Steering Committee will be responsible and accountable for the use and application of the PLA's risk management procedures as outlined in the FAM, and will report to the chair of the PLA annually.

During the year we reassessed our risks in relation to all PLA operations. The assessment involves all relevant staff and focuses generally on the following areas:

- information/data
- physical security
- staff
- financial systems/records
- policies and procedures
- administration
- stakeholder consultation.

We conducted a separate risk assessment of the current application processing system in place at the PLA, which led to the amendment of the PIM.

## Freedom of Information and Privacy Legislation

### Freedom of Information

Section 137 of the Act states that the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* does not apply to any document given to or produced by the PLA under the Act. However, while members of the public are not permitted access to documents, we have developed and published a statement of the affairs of the PLA in compliance with section 18 of the Freedom of Information Act. The statement of affairs is available from our website and explains:

- our structure and function
- the effect of our activities on the community
- the extent of community participation in PLA policy formulation
- documents held by the PLA
- bodies established to provide advice to the PLA.

There were no applications made to the PLA under the Freedom of Information Act during the financial year 2004-05.

### Privacy

On 10 September 2001 the Queensland Government approved Information Standard 42 (Information Privacy) which introduced a new administrative privacy regime into the public sector. The aim of introducing these new privacy arrangements is to protect all forms of personal information held in the Queensland public sector from being lost, misused or inappropriately modified or disclosed.



In compliance with Information Standard 42, we developed and introduced a Privacy Plan during 2002-03. The plan is published on the PLA website and outlines the types of personal information we collect, the disclosure of and access to information and how information is stored and disposed of. The Privacy Plan also establishes a procedure for individuals who wish to make a complaint about our management of their personal information.

### External Audit

The PLA uses the Queensland Audit Office as its external auditor.

### Internal Audit

As we are a small office with a limited budget, we have implemented a framework for a regular systems appraisal instead of a separate internal audit function. The systems appraisal, which is conducted once every three years at a minimum, aims to assess the appropriateness of systems and procedures and the proper functioning of internal controls. The systems appraisal is undertaken in conjunction with the broader risk management process. The next systems appraisal is due in the year 2005-06.

### Public Interest Disclosures

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1994* defines a public interest disclosure as a disclosure of information about:

- someone else's conduct
- maladministration
- negligent or improper management affecting public funds
- danger to public health or safety, or danger to the environment
- danger to a person with a disability.

There were no public interest disclosures made to the PLA during the financial year 2004-05.

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