

Supporting our Business

Our People

The PLA recognises that its employees are its most important asset and values the contribution of all its staff. Officers of the Authority are highly trained and skilled in the work that they undertake. Officers specialise in areas such as finance, administration, probity, policy, research, audit and compliance processes.

The PLA has a focus on client service and all staff embrace a professional approach to service delivery within a healthy and positive work environment.

This year our staff numbered eight full-time staff members. 62 percent of our staff are women (see tables 12 and 13).

The PLA's success depends on building the capability of our people. Recognising the benefit of relevant training, staff and management work together to identify appropriate development opportunities, which assist both individual career progress and strengthens the PLA's overall capability.

The PLA encourages all staff to undertake relevant professional development and staff have participated in on-site and external training programs. Training has included courses or workshops in software, financial management, leadership, communication, conflict management, and ethics and misconduct.

In early 2008-09, the PLA is proposing to engage in a team development exercise, which will take place in an informal environment, and will aim to:

- maximise staff participation and engagement;
- boost staff morale;
- encourage interpersonal development;
- facilitate a collegiate spirit amongst staff;

- allow staff to interact outside the strictures of the office; and
- encourage cooperation and facilitate team building skills.

Due to the small number of staff, the PLA is in the unique position of being able to maximise open communication processes. Regular fortnightly staff meetings provide an ideal forum to ensure staff are kept well informed, to air grievances, and to resolve any issues that may be identified.

There was no overseas travel undertaken by either PLA staff or by members of the PLA.

■ Table 12: PLA staff

Staff category	Female	Male
SES2	1	
AO7-AO8	2	2
AO4-AO6	1	1
AO2-AO3	1	
TOTAL	5	3

■ Table 13: PLA staff membership of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) target groups

Target group	Number	Per cent
Women	5	62%
People from a non-English-speaking background	0	0
Aboriginals/Torres Strait Islanders	0	0
People with a disability	0	0

Finance and Administration

The finance and administration section of the PLA comprises three full-time staff members who deliver a range of services to support the operations of the PLA. Finance and administration also has a key role in the development and implementation of effective resource management.

During 2007-08, finance and administration developed and reviewed several processes that influenced the PLA's outcomes. These included:

- Reviewing the FAM and other policies and procedures to ensure the conduct of the financial, administrative and human resource activities of the PLA comply with Whole-of-Government legislation, policies and directives
- Improving the efficiency of brothel licence and managers' certificate application processing
- Reviewing the business management process and implementing integrated budgeting with operational planning
- Continuing to improve the management of risk and the audit of service delivery through better practices
- Streamlining in-house electronic filing systems to ensure adequate recording and security of information and documentation
- Producing corporate information and documentation for distribution to the community, key stakeholders and the industry
- Reviewing the Corporate Services Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the QPS and the PLA with the Shared Service Agency (SSA) and CorpTech. Services such as payroll, processing payments and SAP support are provided by the shared service providers.

The Shared Service Initiative is a Whole-of-Government approach to corporate service delivery. The vision is partnering in corporate services to support and connect Government. Shared services are underpinned by standardising business processes, consolidating technology and pooling resources and expertise. Under the shared service model, government agencies joined together to share corporate services and resources through shared service providers (SSPs). The SSPs service their existing customer agencies through operating level agreements. In 2007-2008, Queensland Treasury led the refinement of the Whole-of-Government model for shared service delivery and provided policy and program management for the Shared Service Initiative. From 21 September 2007, the SSA was transferred from Queensland Treasury to the Department of Public Works through a machinery of Government change. The SSA now services a number of departments, agencies and other entities across Government. For more information on the SSA refer to the Department of Public Works Annual Report.

Under the PLA's human resource management policies, ongoing development and implementation of the health and safety management system ensures that the PLA can provide a safe environment for employees, visitors and contractors alike. To support PLA staff, access is available to employee assistance services provided by the QPS. The PLA's recruitment practices ensure that its officers possess the skills and knowledge needed to continue to achieve its priorities resulting in 'a crime-free legal industry that provides one of the safest and healthiest environments for legal sex workers in the country' (CMC, December 2004).

We did not enter into any consultancy contracts during the year.



Information Management

Another area where we receive assistance from the QPS is in the provision of Information Technology (IT) services and support, which includes maintenance of the PLA website. The assistance provided by the QPS is formalised in a separate IT SLA.

The PLA has completed development of the internal licensing database for the purpose of recording and reporting on:

- Brothel applicants
- Manager applicants
- Compliance activities
- Development applications for licensed brothels
- Brothel premises information.

The information from the database has improved the Authority's ability to obtain statistical data and other information concerning the licensed brothel industry.

Outlook for 2008-09

The PLA will continue to contribute to the Government's outcome *Safe and Secure Communities* where all Queenslanders are safe and respected and where workplace health and safety for all workers in the licensed sex industry is a high priority. The Authority is determined that it will continue to administer a regime that has high guarantees of health and safety for sex workers and their clients. Moreover, the PLA is committed to creating a more lawful society that will protect the personal safety, rights and property of all Queenslanders. Through its probity processes, the Authority will continue to ensure that

applicants for brothel licences and approved manager certificates are suitable persons to operate or manage a licensed brothel. We will also continue to work closely with PETF to manage the application process and we are committed to ensuring the maintenance of an effective and customer-oriented licensing procedure. We will strive to improve our efficiency and effectiveness in the coming year. To achieve this we will:

- Assist in the preparation and drafting of any amendments to the Act arising from Cabinet consideration of the CMC report, *Regulating Outcall Prostitution*
- Implement any subsequent amendments to the Act arising from this process
- Continue to progress relevant prostitution-related issues through the inter-departmental working group
- Assist to progress the alternate model put forward by Queensland Health regarding the provision of sexual health certificates issued to sex workers in licensed brothels
- Continue to educate and provide guidance on the new Guidelines for prostitution advertising
- Monitor and review the Guidelines for prostitution advertising
- Explore amendments to the *Prostitution Regulation 2000* to broaden the definition of 'sexually transmissible disease'
- Finalise the proposed PLA industry monitoring program.