

Our Corporate Governance Framework

Appointment of PLA members

PLA members are appointed by the Governor-in-Council, on the recommendation of the Minister, pursuant to the Prostitution Act, for a period of not more than five years. A person is disqualified from being or 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.

Additionally, the Minister may have regard to a person's extended criminal history or a change to their extended criminal history in deciding that the person should not be recommended for appointment or continue as a member of the Authority.

No members of the PLA were disqualified from continuing as a member throughout the year.

The strategic planning cycle

Section 9 of the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2009* requires that each statutory body develop a strategic plan for the agency to cover a period of four years. The Authority has approved the PLA's Strategic Plan and it may be accessed from the PLA website. An Operational Plan has also been developed and approved by the PLA. They are both reviewed and updated annually.

Our objectives and strategies

The Strategic Plan identifies the following objectives and strategies.

Table 3:

GOAL	STRATEGY
<p>To ensure an efficient and effective brothel licensing system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process applications and forward them to the QPS within 20 business days. • Regularly liaise with QPS on the status of applications. • Being clear and concise about the information required from applicants. • Monitoring the application process and making appropriate changes to ensure a more efficient and effective system. • Contribute to any review of the Prostitution Act or other legislation which impacts on the PLA. • Contribute to and implement any amendments to the Prostitution Act. • Engage with the Minister and with other government agencies on the regulation of the sex industry. • Inform and educate stakeholders on the application process and their regulatory obligations. • Being responsive to stakeholder feedback.
<p>To have a licensed brothel sector that complies with the Prostitution Act and best practice standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor compliance via regular scheduled and unannounced audits and inspections of all licensed brothels. • Educate licensees and managers in respect of their obligations and the expectations of the PLA. • Review and amend brothel licence conditions for currency and best practice. • Review and amend the <i>Guidelines for the Operations of Licensed Brothels in Queensland</i>. • Monitoring compliance with and the impact of the <i>Guidelines for Prostitution Advertising</i>. • Take and respond to complaints about prostitution related matters.
<p>To inform the sex industry, the community and the Minister about relevant prostitution issues in Queensland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and disseminate fact sheets, newsletters, and other documents (in multiple languages, where appropriate). • Ensure that information on the PLA website is relevant and current. • Liaise with the Queensland sex worker organisation, Respect Inc. • Written communication with key stakeholders, as appropriate, throughout the year. • Regular and timely communication with the Minister.
<p>To provide a safe, fair and productive workplace at the PLA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership to ensure acceptable service provision at the PLA. • Supportive and open style of management. • Review workflow and processes of PLA operations. • Ensure staff are provided with relevant training opportunities.

Ethical and professional conduct

High standards of ethical conduct continue to be one of the PLA's major objectives. All staff of the Office of the PLA are subject to the single *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service*, and have been provided with a copy of the code. Staff are provided with information on public sector ethics at induction, and throughout the year. This year, all staff of the Office of the PLA participated in a single day behavioural ethics workshop provided by Australian Business Training Solutions. The administrative procedures and management practices of the Authority have proper regard to the ethics principles and values and the Code of Conduct.

The Prostitution Act also permits the obtaining of a person's extended criminal history in order to determine if they should be considered for appointment to the Office of the PLA or if they should continue to be engaged as a staff member. Additionally, staff are obliged to provide notice, in the approved form, of a change in their extended criminal history. There were no changes in 2013-14.

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. The PIM was reviewed and updated in 2013-14.

Public interest disclosures

The PLA received no public interest disclosures under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* during the year.

Risk management

Risk assessment is a means of identifying all potential risks to the operations and functioning of the PLA and to develop controls to mitigate those risks. Division 12 of the FAM requires that, "the PLA will have effective policies, procedures and systems in place for effectively managing identified risks that may affect operations." A risk assessment has been conducted and was noted by members of the PLA. In conducting this assessment, previous risk assessments were reviewed to determine those risks and controls which had been previously identified. The most recent systems appraisal was also reviewed. As with any organisation, staff are best placed to identify associated risks. Accordingly, all staff at the Office of the PLA were consulted and encouraged to contribute to this risk assessment, which focused generally on the following areas:

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

The PLA has been in operation since 1 July 2000. In the intervening years, the risks facing the PLA have been identified and addressed through the successive development of policy and procedures. Risk control measures have been implemented across the agency for all business areas. The PLA has experienced a plateau in its development and is now in a process of ongoing review of existing policies and procedures. In particular, regular staff meetings provide a forum to raise and discuss any minor risks identified by the agency's personnel, which can then be addressed and remedied immediately by the institution of new control measures or by modifying existing policies and procedures. The risk assessment concluded that existing controls and mitigating factors are adequate to address the identified risks to the operations of the agency. There have been no incidents or

breaches in the intervening period and accordingly a further risk assessment has not been warranted.

The small size and limited budget of the Authority do not warrant an audit committee. Existing policies and procedures are effective in addressing and mitigating risks and members of the PLA provide oversight of the activities of the Office of the PLA.

External audit

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

Internal audit

As a statutory body, the PLA is not required to establish an internal audit function. The PLA has not established an internal audit function because of the small size of the agency, its limited budget, and its few staff members. The PLA has clear accountabilities and arrangements in place to minimise financial risks. Ultimately, oversight is provided by PLA members. The PLA has 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.

In 2011-12, we undertook our triennial systems appraisal with the objective of identifying specific risks to the PLA, evaluating the degree of risk for each system/process, identifying current controls and implementing appropriate control improvements to minimise the risk. The systems appraisal was completed in consultation with relevant PLA staff with the following systems reviewed:

- application processing
- monitoring and compliance
- internal processes
- reporting
- complaints handling
- finance.

The results of the systems appraisal were provided to the Executive Director for consideration and approval. The PLA implemented appropriate control measures for relevant risks. The next systems appraisal is to be completed in 2014-15.

Records management

The PLA complies with the provisions of the *Public Records Act 2002, Information Standard 40: Recordkeeping, and Information Standard 31: Retention and Disposal of Public Records*. The PLA has developed its own *Retention and Disposal Schedule*, which has been approved by the Queensland State Archivist. In 2013-14, the PLA focused on implementing this schedule and this will continue in 2014-15.