

Message from the Chair

This will be my final report as Chair of the Prostitution Licensing Authority. My term is due to expire on 21 November 2014 and I will not be seeking reappointment. By the time I retire, I will have presided over the Authority for nine of its 14 years of existence. It has been an honour to serve the people of Queensland by regulating licensed brothels and prostitution advertising in the public interest.

I am especially proud that since inception the PLA has prioritised safe and secure environments at licensed brothels, coupled with an insistence on appropriate work health and safety arrangements. Licensed brothels are acknowledged as providing the safest and healthiest environment for sex work in the state, benefiting the entire community. Restrictions on the location of brothels, combined with their unobtrusive appearance, has meant that they have not intruded into people's everyday existence. It is telling that the PLA has never received a complaint about the impact on community amenity of any operating licensed brothel.

During 2013-14, the PLA continued its careful scrutiny of applicants for brothel licences and approved manager's certificates to determine if they were fit and proper persons for involvement in the licensed sector. The PLA also closely monitored the operations of licensed brothels, revealing continued high rates of compliance. As a result of this scrutiny, there has been no demonstrated instance of the infiltration of organised crime (including criminal motorcycle gangs) or any evidence of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual servitude at any of the state's licensed brothels. During the year, there were no complaints about organised crime, official corruption, or human trafficking.

An additional two brothels opened during 2013-14, bringing the total number of brothels in the state to 26, equalling the peak achieved in 2009-10. On 30 June 2014, the PLA granted an individual a brothel licence to operate a new brothel at Marcoola. This brothel opened on 4 July 2014, so that there are now 27 licensed brothels in Queensland. This is the highest number since the commencement of the licensing framework. The PLA has no interest in expansion of the sector for its own sake but only to further the worthy objectives of the *Prostitution Act 1999*.

A significant event during the year was a machinery-of-Government change that resulted in the PLA moving from the police portfolio to that of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. The change has not had a marked impact on the PLA because its structure and functions were not altered. Clients of the PLA would have noticed no difference in service levels.

I place on record the PLA's appreciation of the support given to it by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP, and his staff, and also that of its previous portfolio minister, the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, the Hon Jack Dempsey MP. I also recognise and value the assistance of various government agencies that have so professionally supported and enhanced the work of the PLA. I extend my thanks to my fellow members of the PLA who each bring a range of knowledge and experience to their position, and whose wisdom and counsel I rely on. I also take the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Ms Annette Murphy, Ms Lynette Palmen AM, and Ms Christine Jones, whose terms of appointment expired during the year. Finally, I thank the staff of the office of the PLA for their assistance during the year. I want to particularly acknowledge the able and efficient administration of the Executive Director of the Office of the PLA, Ms Margaret Isaac. Her knowledge of the sex industry and wise counsel has been invaluable to me during my tenure as Chair.

Manus Boyce
Chair