

New look *In Touch*

Welcome to the new look *In Touch*, the newsletter of the Prostitution Licensing Authority. The aim of the publication is still to inform and educate about the role of the PLA, the rights and obligations of those in the legal sex industry, and about other matters related to prostitution such as the health and safety of sex workers, but in a more concise and compact format.

The frequency of the newsletter is also going to change. It will now be produced monthly, allowing for a better focus on contemporary issues facing the industry. It will also mean that you will be able to email details of approved manager vacancies throughout the year for publication in the next practicable edition of *In Touch*.

WISI Info has been extended

The sex worker interim project, WISI Info (Information for Workers in the Sex Industry) was due to conclude at the end of 2007, but has been extended until June 2008 to allow additional time for Queensland Health's assessment of the needs of sex workers in Queensland.

WISI Info will continue to provide telephone and email information and referral to sex workers throughout the state. Some work will also be conducted to update the content of the SQWISI website.

The WISI telephone is attended all day Monday and on Tuesday mornings. The answering machine and email is also checked and responded to throughout the week. Sex workers with clinical concerns or enquiries should continue to contact their local sexual health clinic or GP as WISI Info is an information and referral service only.

The contact details for WISI Info are:
Phone: 07 3250 0251
Email: wisiinfo@optusnet.com.au
Web: www.sqwisi.org.au

Needs assessment of Qld sex workers

Queensland Health has contracted with a provider to undertake an assessment of the current health needs of the sex worker population in Queensland, particularly those related to HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, and sexual health.

The purpose of the needs assessment is to make recommendations that will influence the development of a tender for a new \$400,000 per annum state-wide program to deliver education and prevention strategies to reduce the risk to sex workers and the general community of HIV, Hepatitis C and STI's.

As part of the process of conducting the needs assessment, the provider will be engaging in stakeholder consultations, including with male and female sex workers (such as licensed brothel workers and street workers) and brothel licensees.

Alcohol on brothel premises

In December last year, enforcement action was taken against a licensed brothel for having alcohol on premises. As a result, a brothel licensee and an approved manager were each issued with a notice to appear in the Richlands Magistrates Court.

This is a timely reminder to all brothel licensees and approved managers that it is a requirement of s. 83 of the *Prostitution Act 1999* that a person is not permitted

to possess liquor at a licensed brothel. An offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$3,000. If liquor is found at a brothel, the licensee and any approved manager whose duty it was to personally supervise the brothel at the relevant time each commit an offence, punishable by a maximum fine of \$3,000.

Licensees and managers are reminded that they are subject to a range of statutory obligations, as well as any conditions that attach to their licence or certificate. In particular, it is the responsibility of each licensee and manager to familiarise themselves with those obligations. Both the Act and the *Prostitution Regulation 2000* may be downloaded from: www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Employee entitlements

Brothel licensees are reminded that they are subject to a range of industrial relations obligations, including ensuring that any employees are properly paid. Employees have a number of options to recover unpaid wages and entitlements. Further information is available from Wageline: www.wageline.qld.gov.au or by telephoning 1300 369 945.

Sexual health

Contrary to widely held community perceptions, American and Australian research has indicated that sex workers have a higher standard of sexual health than the general population. To ensure this continues, everyone involved in the sex industry has a special obligation to protect their sexual health. For sex workers and their clients this means always practicing safe sex and abstaining from sex whilst infective with a sexually transmissible disease (STD).

Under the *Prostitution Act 1999*, a person must not work as a prostitute at a licensed brothel during any period in which they know they are infective with a STD. Offenders will be liable to a maximum penalty of \$7,500. Likewise, a licensee or an approved manager must not permit a person to work at a brothel during any period in which they know the prostitute is infective with a STD. Offenders will be liable to a maximum penalty of \$9,000.

Sex workers at brothels are required to be subject to sexual health checks every three months. It is a condition of licence that brothel licensees must ensure that sex workers hold a current sexual health certificate of attendance. Whilst there is no similar requirement for sole operators, all sex workers are strongly advised to undergo regular sexual health checks, for the safety of both themselves and their clients.

Do you want to learn more about STD's and safe sex practices? Queensland Health maintains a useful website which has a wealth of information about a range of STD's, tips for safe sex, and contact details of sexual health clinics. Go to:
www.health.qld.gov.au/sexhealth/

Sponsorship no longer required for manager certificates

As a result of the August 2007 amendments to the *Prostitution Act 1999* (the Act), an application for an approved manager's certificate no longer requires the sponsorship of a brothel licensee. This means that a person can apply to the PLA for a manager's certificate without first being employed in the industry, or having accepted an offer of employment. However, it remains a requirement of the Act that: "A certificate authorises the holder of the certificate to be an approved manager of a licensed brothel at the premises stated in the certificate." In these circumstances, the PLA will grant a successful applicant a certificate, but will not issue it until such time as the person has accepted an offer of

employment as a manager at a licensed brothel and has supplied the PLA with the details of the premises.

Once a certificate has been granted, the PLA is unable to issue a refund. Therefore, it is in an applicant's best interest to ensure that they have a reasonable prospect of securing employment in the industry before applying for a certificate.

New and updated fact sheets

The PLA maintains a range of fact sheets to educate and inform interested persons about prostitution in Queensland. The four existing fact sheets have been revised and updated and seven new fact sheets have also been developed.

The fact sheets may be obtained by contacting the office, or can be downloaded from our website:
www.pla.qld.gov.au.

WA's prostitution reforms in doubt

The December 2007 edition of *In Touch* included a feature on the proposed prostitution reforms in Western Australia. Since then they have passed the Legislative Assembly, and are now being considered by the Legislative Council of the West Australian Parliament.

However, a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) has resigned from the Labor Party and become an independent. The MLC has expressed some concerns in relation to the Government's social reforms, including those relating to prostitution. The outcome is that WA's proposed new prostitution laws may be in jeopardy. The PLA will continue to monitor this issue and keep you informed.

Changes in information

It is a requirement of sections 20 and 45 of the Act that licensees and managers must inform the PLA of any changes of information given in the application for a licence or certificate. The PLA must be informed in

writing of the change in information within 10 days of the licensee or manager becoming aware of the change. For example, a change in ownership of the brothel premises, or a change of address.

2008 PLA meeting dates

The PLA Board meets on the first Monday of each month. Meeting dates for the remainder of 2008 are: 3 March, 7 April, May date to be advised, 2 June, 7 July, 4 August, 1 September, 6 October, 3 November, and 1 December. *Whilst current at the time of printing, these dates are tentative and subject to change without notice.*

Vacancies for approved manager positions

AABS180: 180 Abbotsford Rd, Bowen Hills. Part-time/Full-time position available. Call 3852 2057 for details.

Scarlet Harem: Looking to move to the Sunshine Coast? Seeking approved manager. Fun team. Immediate start. Casual 24/7 rosters. Great incentives and \$ for the right person. Managers are not required to do sexual service health checks. Call 5476 5044 for details.

Cleo's on Nile: 12 Nile St, Woolloongabba. Seeking approved manager. The friendliest and most beautiful bordello in Brisbane. Flexible hours with great conditions. Contact Sharren or Lyn on 3393 1678 or admin@cleosonnile.com.

My Room: Looking to move to a mining town, Mt Isa? Seeking approved managers. Fun team. Immediate start. 24/7 rosters. Great incentives and \$ for right persons. Phone 4743 3498 or email details to ask@myroom.net.au.

Viper Room: 945 Fairfield Rd, Yeerongpilly. Seeking approved manager. Work for a brothel that cares. Excellent remuneration and conditions. Call Joan on 0421887223 or administrator@theviperroom.com.au.

Intrigue of Marcoola: 13 Cessna St, Marcoola, Sunshine Coast. Mature approved manager required for casual shift work, including weekends and nights. Call 0432582428.