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**Submission to the
Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety
Inquiry into the operation of the *Prostitution Act 1992***

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Executive Summary

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety Inquiry into the operation of the *Prostitution Act 1992*. This is a timely review given a lack of periodic review of the ACT's prostitution industry, and the death in 2008 of 17-year-old Janine Cameron in a legal Canberra brothel.

The Australian Christian Lobby believes that prostitution is harmful to those engaged in it and is a form of exploitation and abuse of women. Prostitution is perpetuated not only by traffickers and pimps but by the men who create the demand for sexual services. Prostituted women are not to be blamed for the prostitution industry; rather the ACL believes that they should be provided with support and assistance to leave the harmful and exploitative industry.

Decriminalisation or legalisation of prostitution promotes a culture of acceptance among the men who create the demand for paid sex as well as in the wider community. Prostitution becomes something which is legally acceptable and therefore socially acceptable; it is just another "job" for the women who "choose" it and provides a necessary "service" to the men who "need" it. It makes it easier for vulnerable women and girls to be drawn into the industry and fosters degrading attitudes among men towards women, including the view that women's bodies are products which can be purchased and used for sexual pleasure.

Decriminalisation and regulation systems are put in place with the objectives of controlling prostitution and creating a safer and more open environment for sex workers. However, these aims are generally not met and in most cases the very opposite outcomes occur. In particular, legalisation of prostitution creates an environment in which human trafficking is more likely to occur. Further, it also creates an environment in which underage prostitution is more likely to occur.

Above all else, prostitution is degrading and destructive for women and girls. It is a form of abuse and violence against women by the men who purchase them. Prostitution is regarded as a problem that society can never be rid of, so attempts are made to control prostitution by decriminalisation and regulation. However, as can be seen by the situation in Sweden, society can reduce the amount of prostitution by addressing the core cause of prostitution: the demand from men who purchase women for sex. Other Nordic countries are now following Sweden's lead, and South Korea has had a similar system since 2004.

If gender equality is held in high regard and women are seen not as willing participants but as victims of male expectation of sexual gratification on demand, then progress can be made to a society which does not tolerate the purchase of women for sex and which assists the exploited victims of prostitution to exit the industry. The ACL therefore recommends the ACT Government adopt the Swedish model of prostitution regulation, which criminalises the purchaser rather than the seller of sexual services.

Introduction

Prostitution exists primarily to provide sexual pleasure on demand for men. Many of those who “choose” prostitution do so out of financial desperation, drug dependency, or due to coercion. Regardless of the reasons for choosing it, the choice is one that will be harmful to a woman’s physical and mental health, and detrimental to communities. As such, the Government should not tolerate the purchase of women’s bodies by men and avoid the growth of a culture that views this as an acceptable part of life in the ACT.

The greater cultural acceptance that normalisation of prostitution creates is evidenced in the listing of Melbourne brothel The Lonely Planet on the Australian Stock Exchange, and the more recent attempts by Sydney brothel Stiletto to join them on the stock exchange.¹ As one journalist wrote, there is “something dystopian about a society where mum and dad investors and Super Fund bosses could monitor the stock market . . . to see if their CEO has been working prostitutes productively enough”.² There have been other pushes for even more public visibility. The St Kilda Football Club agreed to a sponsorship deal with a Melbourne brothel in 2010. The club withdrew from the deal after the AFL rightly condemned the move as being inconsistent with their family-friendly image and their philosophy of respect for women.³

The legalisation of brothels may be motivated by the desire to control, contain, and police the industry, but it has led to an encroachment of the industry into the popular cultural psyche.

Prostitution should be seen as a form of male abuse and exploitation of women and should not be tolerated in a society which values gender equality and respect for women. Instead of allowing for the normalisation of prostitution, the Australian Christian Lobby urges the ACT Government to consider how to minimise the problem of prostitution by addressing its primary cause: demand. Without the men who purchase sex – the “johns” – there would be no prostitution industry.

¹ Speedy, B. (2010, December 30), ‘Stiletto brothel keen to live out listing fantasy’, *The Australian*, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/stiletto-brothel-seeks-backdoor-listing/story-e6frg8zx-1225978255960>

² Gardiner, C. (2011, January 6), ‘We must not list brothels on the stock market’, *The Punch*, <http://www.thepunch.com.au/articles/we-must-not-list-brothels-on-the-stock-market/>

³ AAP (2010, January 16), ‘Club withdraws from brothel sponsorship’, *The Age*, <http://www.theage.com.au/af/afl-news/club-withdraws-from-brothel-sponsorship-20100116-md69.html>

Demand drives prostitution: the 'Swedish Model' of prostitution

The Australian Christian Lobby takes the view that prostitution is at its core a form of abuse and violence against women, and of exploitation. Prostituted women should not be viewed as the driving force behind the industry; rather, the male demand for sexual services is the cause of prostitution:

The United Nations' *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (UN Protocol) requires States Parties to "adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures . . . to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking".⁴ ACL considers that this strikes at the heart of the issue: liberalising prostitution laws sends the message that demanding sexual services is acceptable in contemporary society. If prostitution is no longer condemned by the law and is legally acceptable, for many men this means it is also socially and culturally acceptable, and demand increases. In turn, illegal prostitution will increase to meet the demand that the legal supply cannot meet, and the potential for human trafficking and other associated detriments increase with it. Despite some concern about "pushing prostitution underground", the fact is that legalising prostitution leads to an expansion of the "underground" industry as well as growing an inherently dangerous but legal industry. ACL believes that the best way of tackling the problems of prostitution is to cut off demand, and the best way to do this is to criminalise the purchase of sex, rather than the selling of sex.

The Swedish Model

Sweden has come closest to meeting the requirement in the UN Protocol to discourage demand for prostitution. In 1999, Sweden passed the *Act Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services*. Sweden recognises prostitution as a "serious form of male violence against women and children" and, in keeping with the country's commitment to gender equality, sought ways to protect women from prostitution by focusing on the core cause – the demand for women to provide sexual pleasure, without which prostitution would not be able to flourish and expand.⁵ The women's movement played a pivotal role in the country introducing the laws,⁶ highlighting the fact that prostitution is at its core an issue of respect for women and gender equality.

Under the Swedish law, prostituted women are not criminally liable; it is the purchaser of sex who is committing the crime. It covers all forms of sexual services purchased in any circumstances.⁷

Although the law was initially met with criticism by police and judicial authorities, they are now supportive of the legislation.⁸

The new law has been remarkably effective. Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare has reported significant decreases in the number of women in street prostitution and the number of

⁴ United Nations, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, Article 9.5.

⁵ Ekberg, G. (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, pp. 2-3

⁶ Claude, K. (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer: The Swedish Example: Stopping Prostitution and Trafficking Where it All Begins*, pp. 36-37

⁷ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 4

⁸ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

men buying sex.⁹ Stockholm, with a population of 1.3 million, has about 200 people in street prostitution. By comparison, prostitution hot-spot Amsterdam (population 750,000) has tens of thousands of prostitutes.¹⁰

Co-Executive Director of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Gunilla Ekberg also argues that prostitution and human trafficking are inseparable and are intrinsically linked.¹¹ The Swedish laws have led to a “concrete decrease in the number of victims” of human trafficking, with the European Parliament finding that “traffickers have had problems finding enough sex buyers in Sweden, the demand has been much lower than expected.”¹² Police wiretaps have confirmed that criminal groups view Sweden as a poor market, and the illegal brothels that do exist are small in scope.¹³ The National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings has estimated that around 400-600 women were trafficked into Sweden, a considerably smaller number than in surrounding countries, and the law has had “direct and positive effects on the trafficking of human beings for sexual purposes to Sweden and that Sweden is no longer an attractive market for traffickers”.¹⁴

A concern with the Swedish model of prostitution, one which was raised by the European Parliament,¹⁵ is that, while it may decrease the amount of trafficking into the jurisdiction, it simply creates displacement and trafficking increases in neighbouring areas. However, insofar as a country or a state or territory has control over its own laws, it can and should deal with issues as serious as human trafficking to whatever extent it can.

The Swedish laws have been successful in decreasing the demand in Sweden for the purchase of sex by men, and it is unlikely that all of that demand has spilled over borders. Indeed, rather than simply “transferring” the problem, the laws have started to have an influence in the region, with both Norway¹⁶ and Iceland¹⁷ now implementing the same model. Norway’s prohibition on the purchase of sex goes further to include prohibiting Norwegian citizens from purchasing sex abroad as well as at home.¹⁸

⁹ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

¹⁰ Claude (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer*, pp. 13-14.

¹¹ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 3

¹² European Parliament (2005), *Study on National Legislation on Prostitution and the Trafficking in Women and Children*, p. 133, http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/download.action;jsessionid=h932NJILT8bGTNJKlpWq3vpfs2vJD1ZsvZmtKJdhKNPD5Sw4txpVl-285985297?nodeId=94d50494-83a2-4787-8f70-7e55ae564ba2&fileName=Study+on+National+Legislation+and+Prostitution_en.pdf&fileType=pdf

¹³ Ministry of Justice (2010), *Selected extracts of the Swedish government report SOU 2010:49: The Ban against the Purchase of Sexual Services. An evaluation 1999-2008*, p. 29.

¹⁴ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

¹⁵ European Parliament (2005), *Study on National Legislation on Prostitution and the Trafficking in Women and Children*, p. 133

¹⁶ BBC (2009, January 1), ‘New Norway law bans buying of sex’, BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7806760.stm>

¹⁷ Sigurðardóttir, E. (2009, June 3), ‘Buying sex now punishable in Iceland’, *Nordic Gender Institute*, <http://www.nikk.no/English/Subjects/Prostitution/News/?module=Articles;action=Article.publicShow;ID=920>

¹⁸ BBC (2009, January 1), ‘New Norway law bans buying of sex’

South Korea has also been trying to prevent prostitution and punish purchasers since 2004. The *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts*¹⁹ prohibits the purchase of sex and also requires the government to “take legal and institution measures and raise necessary funds regarding education and promotion of public awareness on the prevention and elimination of prostitution, procuring prostitution and associated acts”.²⁰ The *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof*²¹ requires states to “provide legal and institutional devices and take necessary administrative and financial measures . . . to prevent prostitution and support the protection and self-reliance of the victims of prostitution and those who sell sex”.²²

If criminalising the buying of sex is an effective method of reducing human trafficking, which has proven to be the case in Sweden, then hopefully such a system would be noted by other jurisdictions and would spread. We have seen this effect in Scandinavia. The Australian Christian Lobby recommends the ACT leads the way in Australia in implementing laws which will reduce harm to women and discourage trafficking.

¹⁹ *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts* (2004) (South Korea), http://www.stop.or.kr/english/htm/08eng_03_01_01.asp

²⁰ *Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts* (2004) (South Korea), Article 3

²¹ *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof* (2004) (South Korea),

²² *Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof* (2004) (South Korea), Article 3

Legalisation Does Not Achieve Its Aims

Illegal prostitution growth in relation to liberalisation of prostitution laws

One of the main aims of decriminalisation or regulation of prostitution is to control illegal prostitution. Experience has shown, however, that the opposite outcomes usually occur – that legalising prostitution results in an increased demand for sexual services and in turn a growth in both the legal and illegal sectors.

The Queensland experience

Despite efforts to control and contain the illegal prostitution industry by regulating it, this has proven unsuccessful in Queensland. In their report *Ten Years of Prostitution Regulation in Queensland*, Schloenhardt and the Human Trafficking Working Group estimate that up to 90% of prostitution in Queensland remains unregulated.²³ The report questions the effectiveness of the system in decreasing illegal prostitution, including whether it “assists in making human trafficking unnecessary or whether it contributes to an influx of foreign sex workers and their exploitation in Queensland’s legal and illegal brothels”.²⁴ Queensland’s Crime and Misconduct Commission observes that “sex trafficking appears to be one of the unfortunate consequences of an industry driven by excessive demand for services with insufficient safeguards to protect vulnerable people”.²⁵

The Queensland legislation regulates prostitution in brothels and does not cover sole operators working from home or as escorts. However, Schloenhardt’s report finds that 75% of prostitution in Queensland is outcall prostitution, which is illegal when provided by a brothel or some other organised group. A considerable part of outcall prostitution is “run or facilitated by agencies or other prostitution rings, which employ or otherwise contract multiple sex workers”.²⁶

Schloenhardt’s report notes that women in prostitution earn more on average from street prostitution or sole operating than from licensed brothels, with 84.8% of the former and 89% of the latter citing the pay as a main advantage of working outside a licensed brothel.²⁷ Street prostitution continues to be a problem in Queensland. The report cites the Prostitution Licensing Authority’s opinion that “the notion that the Act was passed to eliminate street prostitution has no substance”.²⁸

The laws have also failed to curb massage parlours providing illegal sexual services, which continue to be “easily available and advertised widely on the internet”.²⁹ Adult entertainment and exotic

²³ Schloenhardt, A. et al, (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels: Ten Years of Prostitution Regulation in Queensland*, University of Queensland TC Beirne School of Law, p. 31, <http://www.law.uq.edu.au/documents/humantrafficking/reports-presentations/UQ-HTWG-Ten-Years-of-Prostitution-Regulation-in-Qld-Sep-2009.pdf>

²⁴ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 9

²⁵ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution: An Evaluation of the Prostitution Act 1999 (QLD)*, p. 27

²⁶ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, pp. 17-19

²⁷ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 30

²⁸ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 31

²⁹ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 21

dancing businesses have been reported to be providing sexual services amounting to prostitution, which is illegal.³⁰

In addition to these illegal forms of prostitution, there are a large and growing number of illegal brothels operating in Queensland. One 2002 estimate suggested that for every legal brothel in Queensland there were 100 illegal operators.³¹ More moderate estimates still report a large illegal sector, and Schloenhardt concludes that it is “plausible that the number of illegal brothels exceeds the number of licensed brothels in Queensland”. Those women in prostitution who do work in legal brothels constitute a mere 10% of the industry in that State.³²

The Queensland laws deliberately limit the number and spread of legal brothels, but this serves to push operations underground. There are few economic incentives for Queensland brothel owners or prostituted women to operate legally because the restrictions on size and location placed on Queensland brothels limit the potential profit. Licensing is also expensive,³³ and legal brothels suffer a competitive disadvantage compared to illegal brothels which do not pay fees or taxes and do not have the same restrictions. In addition, detection rates of illegal brothels are low, convictions rare, and sentences usually light. There is thus limited deterrence, and combined with the economic disadvantages and the difficulties surrounding the requirements of regular health checks,³⁴ the laws in Queensland seem to have resulted only in the growth of the illegal industry.³⁵

Schloenhardt concludes that “the introduction of licensed brothels in Queensland has had little, if any impact on illegal forms of prostitution”. The aim of the *Prostitution Act* to draw prostitutes out of the illegal sector “has clearly failed”. The licensing of brothels has “not eliminated the existence of and demand for illegal brothels, escort agencies, and street prostitution”.³⁶

Other jurisdictions

Legalisation of prostitution in Victoria has likewise been unsuccessful in controlling the industry, with illegal or unregulated prostitution accounting for 50% of prostitution in Victoria.³⁷ A report by the Crime and Misconduct Commission (Qld) states that since legalisation of prostitution in Victoria the “sex industry has expanded, the illegal industry has been ‘pushed underground’, criminal involvement has increased and the industry is now more dangerous”.³⁸ Women working in legalised brothels have complained that they have less power to choose clients, their pay rates, or their working hours, and the system favours “big business and entrepreneurs”.³⁹

³⁰ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 22

³¹ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 80

³² Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 29

³³ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels* p. 29

³⁴ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, pp. 59-62.

³⁵ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, pp. 29-30

³⁶ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, pp. 31

³⁷ Donovan, B., Harcourt, C., Egger, S., Schneider, K., O'Connor, J., Marshall, L., Chen, M. & Fairle, C. (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia: A Report to the Western Australian Government*, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, University of New South Wales, p. 1

³⁸ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 30

³⁹ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 30

The Home Office in the United Kingdom examined a wide range of prostitution systems for their 2004 report *Paying the Price: a consultation paper on prostitution*, including those in Australia. They found that "it has not proved possible to restrict ownership of brothels to the extent that had been hoped" and that they remain in the hands of cartels. The situation was similar in the Netherlands, and licensing schemes in both Australia and Europe have "failed to deliver the safe working environment that they set out to achieve". They found that Victoria and New South Wales were "the two worst states for the abuse of children through prostitution".⁴⁰

The UK Home Office also found that the prostitution industry had grown in Victoria after legalisation, "with the illegal sector outstripping the legal sector". The number of illegal Melbourne brothels was estimated to have grown threefold in one year and legalisation had not "overcome the lure of street prostitution", as had been hoped.⁴¹

In New Zealand, a Maxim Institute study of prostitution showed that decriminalisation has not led to any decrease in the number of street workers or underage workers and had in fact likely led to an increase.⁴²

The Home Office report examined registration schemes, which are usually implied to "ensure that those involved are regularly checked" for infections. They suggest that "mandatory testing produces a two-tier system of registered and non-registered prostitutes, with the latter having very limited access to healthcare". In Germany the estimated number of non-registered prostitutes is three times that of registered prostitutes. "Most" women in prostitution in Greece are also not registered.⁴³

The Australian Capital Territory

Illegal prostitution is still a problem in the ACT despite regulation, especially in connection with illegal immigration and exploitation of prostituted women. In late 2010 a group of Thai sex workers were found to be illegally employed in two brothels in Fyshwick.⁴⁴ Earlier that year a woman was charged with running an illegal brothel out of a rented home in Kaleen.⁴⁵ In late 2009 a woman faced court on sex slave and trafficking charges following a police raid in Kambah.⁴⁶

ACT Chief Police Officer Roman Quaedvlieg has said that the police regularly receive information about criminal activity regarding prostitution including drugs, overstaying of visas, sexual servitude

⁴⁰ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price: a consultation paper on prostitution*, Home Office Communication Directorate, pp. 84-86, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/16_07_04_paying.pdf

⁴¹ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp. 84-86

⁴² Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 3, http://www.maxim.org.nz/files/pdf/submission_plrc.pdf, citing Coppedge, S. (2006) *People Trafficking: An International Crisis Fought at the Local Level*, Fulbright New Zealand; available at http://www.fulbright.org.nz/voices/axford/docs/axford2006_coppedge.pdf

⁴³ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp. 87

⁴⁴ Canberra Times (2010, December 21), 'Illegal Fyshwick sex workers detained', *Canberra Times*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/illegal-fyshwick-sex-workers-detained/2030919.aspx>

⁴⁵ ABC (2010, October 15), 'Fine for illegal brothel owner', *ABC*, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/10/15/3039265.htm?site=canberra&source=rss>

⁴⁶ AAP, (2009, November 18), 'Woman to front court on sex slave charges', *The Daily Telegraph*, <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/breaking-news/woman-to-front-court-on-sex-slave-charges/story-e6freuz0-1225799141833>

and exploitation of minors. Prostitution “still attracts the kind of people around which crime fringes do occur”.⁴⁷ Quaedvlieg also has stated that the police and regulators have limited ability to detect the presence of underage girls in prostitution.⁴⁸

In the ACT, the Office of Regulatory Services had made only one visit in the five years up to August last year, with that visit flagged weeks in advance.⁴⁹ The check, made at the end of 2009, resulted in two brothels being shut down for cleaning due to poor hygiene, and found that 9 out of 10 did not have adequate first aid supplies.⁵⁰ These checks fail, however, to address the more damaging issues of abuse and coercion, underage and trafficked workers, mental health and drug use, which continue to be a little understood problem in the ACT.

Health and Safety

Another major aim of liberalising prostitution laws relates to the increased health and safety of both prostituted women and johns. However, this is another failed goal of the various systems that have been implemented.

Prostitution is an inherently unsafe occupation, posing various risks to women in prostitution, including sexually transmitted diseases, the risk of violence and abuse from johns and pimps, psychological harm, and drug use.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

The nature of prostitution means that the women involved are at high risk of sex-related health issues. Even though one of the purported aims of decriminalisation or regulation of the industry is increased health and safety, the reality is that a job which brings a woman into sexual contact with multiple men on an almost daily basis will pose unavoidable dangers to the health of that woman.

The Queensland legislation acknowledges that prostitutes face these risks, with the law requiring the rooms to be sufficiently lit so that sex workers can identify visible signs of sexually transmitted infections. However, this addresses only a small part of the greater problem of STIs, as either a prostitute or a john may be carrying an STI without either of them being aware or showing any visible signs. Furthermore, it may not always be possible for a prostitute to check for visible STI symptoms or do anything if those symptoms are seen.

The San Francisco-based St James Infirmary, a provider of social services for people in prostitution in the United States, gives advice to sex workers on safe sexual practices in its Occupational Health & Safety Handbook. However, it can be seen that the measures they suggest provide minimal protection and at best may be described as making a bad situation slightly less bad. For example, they recommend that while providing services, people in prostitution “run [their] fingers through the pubic hair and look for open soars [sic], rashes or crabs at the base of each hair (crabs can look like

⁴⁷ Stockman, D. (2010, August), ‘Prostitution-related crime blitz’, *The Canberra Times*

⁴⁸ Towell, N. (2011, March 24), ‘Capital’s child sex workers all alone’, *The Canberra Times*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/capitals-child-sex-workers-all-alone/2112788.aspx?storypage=1>

⁴⁹ Stockman, D. (2010), ‘Prostitution-related crime blitz’

⁵⁰ Stockman, D (2010, June 1). ‘Sex industry review welcome: A-G’, *The Canberra Times*

freckles at first glance, but if you look closely, you will see a distinctive crab form).” They instruct them to check the john’s genitals and pre-ejaculate, and “if you think he has an STI, it is best to refuse the client”.⁵¹

The requirement for sex workers to have regular health checks does not create a safe environment. The Crime and Misconduct Commission noted in its 2004 evaluation of the Queensland legislation that examination samples cannot be analysed immediately, and that clinicians cannot provide a certificate to prostitutes stating that they are not carrying an STI – they can only provide a certificate stating that the prostitute was not infective at the time of examination.⁵² Several submissions to the CMC discussed the long “incubation period for diseases such as gonorrhoea (2-8 days) and syphilis (2-8 weeks) [which] means that ‘any girl who is cleared on a Monday morning could have the infection passed on to her by her first client that afternoon’”, and go on to infect each subsequent client until her next health check.⁵³

A team led by Basil Donovan National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research produced a report in conjunction with the University of New South Wales and Melbourne University for the Western Australian Government in 2010. Donovan’s report shows that very few women in prostitution in Perth brothels engage in intercourse without using condoms, but most are requested to do so at least once a week.⁵⁴ Medical testing of the brothel prostitutes in Donovan’s report showed low rates of current infection, but self-reporting indicated that a quarter had a history of blood-borne viruses or STIs.⁵⁵ These figures may appear “low” but, in any other context, would not be acceptable.

Not only does the risk of STIs cause concern for the women involved, it is also a public health issue. Some researchers have claimed that 85% of US prostitution johns have regular sexual partners and 60% are married⁵⁶ and that most Swedish johns are married or partnered⁵⁷ and as many as 40% have children.⁵⁸ The UK Home Office has said their profile of a typical john was “around 30 years of age [and] married”.⁵⁹ There is no reason to believe that the typical Australian john would not likewise be sexually active on a regular basis, carrying the health risks associated with prostitution across to the non-prostitute-using community.

Furthermore, as the Schloenhardt report suggests, even if prostitutes could be considered “safe” for johns, the prostitutes themselves are still at risk of acquiring STIs from those johns. Men are not required to undergo health checks or provide certification that they are free from STIs, and at any

⁵¹ St James Infirmary (2010), *Occupational Health & Safety Handbook* (3rd ed), p. 21

⁵² Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 59

⁵³ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 59

⁵⁴ Donovan, B. et al, (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia: A Report to the Western Australian Government*, National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, University of New South Wales, p. 14, [http://www.nchechr.unsw.edu.au/nchechrweb.nsf/resources/SHPReport/\\$file/WASexReport.pdf](http://www.nchechr.unsw.edu.au/nchechrweb.nsf/resources/SHPReport/$file/WASexReport.pdf)

⁵⁵ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 15

⁵⁶ Farley, M. (2009), *Myths and Facts about Trafficking and Illegal Prostitution*, p. 2, <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/Myths%20&%20Facts%20Legal%20&%20Illegal%20ProstitutionMelissaFarley3-09.pdf>

⁵⁷ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, p. 5

⁵⁸ Claude (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer*, p. 7.

⁵⁹ Home Office (2004), *Paying the Price*, pp. 17.

rate, on a practical level, such requirements would be very difficult to implement or enforce. This is another aspect which reflects the inherent gender inequality of the industry.

The inherent risks of prostitution are of great concern, both to the wider community and to the prostituted women who come into contact with hundreds of men over the course of their working life. This is alarming as a public health issue. As an occupational health and safety issue, such a risk would be unacceptable in any other profession or in any organisation. Measures may be taken to reduce the risks but will never reduce them to an acceptable level.

Violence

Prostituted women are constantly at risk of violence and abuse from johns. Fifty percent of Sydney street prostitutes report violence as part of their work. While the rate for brothel and private prostitutes is much lower it is still an unacceptably high 5 to 10% that report some form of violence at work, including robbery with violence, rape, bashing, and stabbing.⁶⁰

This type of violence would not be accepted in any other context, let alone in any work environment. The secluded nature of prostitution activities exacerbates the risk of this, as does the fact that female prostitutes are usually paired with male buyers. This is another aspect of the problems posed by the gender inequality inherent in prostitution.

The Queensland legislation acknowledges the risks prostituted women face, requiring concealed panic buttons or equivalent security devices in each brothel room. Brothels cannot claim to be legitimate "businesses" on a par with any other business when their employees face constant threat of such violence from their clients and when such measures need to be legislated to minimise the risk.

Psychological harm

Donovan's report drew on a comparative study his team did in 2007 and 2008 of prostituted women in Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne. The Law and Sex Worker Health (LASH) survey found that 10% of Perth brothel prostitutes – twice the proportion of the general population – were found to be psychologically "severely distressed", and that this was strongly associated with drug use.⁶¹ The LASH survey also found that 11.7% of Perth brothel-based women had scores indicating "extreme distress" on the Kessler 6 scale. This number was similar to the Melbourne and Sydney samples and nearly three times that of the general population.⁶² The survey found that about a quarter (24.6%) of Perth women in prostitution reported having no supportive relationship in their life, a number similar to their Melbourne and Sydney samples.⁶³ Street prostitutes suffer mental health problems at a much higher rate than the general population, with nearly half of Sydney street prostitutes meeting the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder.⁶⁴ One American study estimates that, by

⁶⁰ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 5

⁶¹ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 37

⁶² Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 16

⁶³ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 16.

⁶⁴ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 5

comparison, about 7 or 8 per cent of the population suffers from post traumatic stress at some point in their lives.⁶⁵

Drug use

The LASH survey found that over a quarter of Perth brothel prostitutes (25.7%) reported using marijuana, more than 1 in 5 (22.9%) reported using speed, and about a sixth (16.6%) reported using ecstasy in the previous twelve months. Cocaine use was reported at 6.9%.⁶⁶ Donovan's study shows that "only" 7 to 17% of brothel or outcall prostitutes report injecting drugs, a figure that rises for certain groups, such as teenagers and occasional prostitutes, and is high in street prostitutes (>85%).⁶⁷

Tobacco consumption

Other health issues associated with prostitution include the level of tobacco consumption, with up to 82% of women in prostitution reporting as cigarette smokers.⁶⁸ This is in marked contrast with the general population. In 1995, 24% of Australians smoked,⁶⁹ and by 2007 this was estimated to have dropped to 19%.⁷⁰

Health and safety summary

It is impossible to ensure the same standard of occupational health and safety in prostitution as other organisations, due to the inherent dangers of the occupation. The government must ensure that the same occupational health and safety standards apply to brothels and sex workers as to any other business or organisation.

⁶⁵ Psychiatric Disorders, 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)', <http://www.psychiatric-disorders.com/articles/ptsd/index.php>

⁶⁶ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 16

⁶⁷ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 5

⁶⁸ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 5

⁶⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2000), 4102.0 - *Australian Social Trends*, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/4102.0Media%20Release22000?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4102.0&issue=2000&num=&view=>

⁷⁰ Australian Women Online (2009, September 12), 'Dramatic drop in the number of smokers in Australia', *Australian Women Online*, <http://www.australianwomenonline.com/dramatic-drop-in-the-number-of-smokers-in-australia/>

Additional issues

Prostitution is commonly and rightly linked to various negative circumstances. Prostituted women with backgrounds of abuse, poverty, and drug addiction are grossly over represented. It is also associated with other criminal activity and, more seriously still, with human trafficking and underage exploitation.

Some international and national statistics

The nature of the industry makes comprehensive statistics difficult to gather, but typical concerns include high numbers of women who are trafficked, who are in debt bondage, who are coerced, abused, physically assaulted, raped, or otherwise intimidated and bullied, and who have psychological distress including post-traumatic stress disorder. Other concerns surround the trends that show prostituted women often have a background of physical or sexual abuse, do not have viable career alternatives, and especially that a large number of prostituted women are working or began work while under the age of 18.

Some studies show alarming numbers of women in prostitution do not want to be there. Researcher Melissa Farley claims that as many as 90% or more of prostitutes "want out of prostitution immediately, but the decision is out of their hands and in the hands of their pimps, their husbands, their landlords, their addictions, their children's bellies". She cites studies done in Toronto and across five nations.⁷¹ She also claims that up to half the women in prostitution in the UK started underage and the average age of entry into prostitution in the USA is 13-14 years.⁷²

The nature of child prostitution and people trafficking also makes it extremely difficult to gather statistics. Anti-child pornography and child prostitution group ECPAT International has estimated that there are at least a million prostituted children worldwide, with the Philippines alone home to about 100,000.⁷³

Underage prostitution

The concerning issue of underage prostitution was recently brought into public focus in the ACT by the case of Janine Cameron, found dead from a heroin overdose in a legal brothel.⁷⁴ She was just six weeks past her 17th birthday and had had a drug addiction for two years before her death.

In 2010 a Sydney mother was jailed for prostituting her 16-year-old daughter through an escort agency.⁷⁵ More recently was the shocking Tasmanian case of a 12-year-old girl being prostituted to over 100 men.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Farley (2009), *Myths and Facts about Trafficking and Illegal Prostitution*, p. 3

⁷² Farley (2009), *Myths and Facts about Trafficking and Illegal Prostitution*, p. 6

⁷³ ECPAT International (2001), *Facts and figures: even one child is one too many*, [http://www.ecpat.net/worldcongressIII/PDF/Background/Briefing%20notes 2001/Note%2020statistics.pdf](http://www.ecpat.net/worldcongressIII/PDF/Background/Briefing%20notes%202001/Note%2020statistics.pdf)

⁷⁴ Towell, N. & Violante, V. (2008, November 1) 'Death of innocence: Janin 17, lost to the night', *The Canberra Times*, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/death-of-innocence-janin-17-lost-to-the-night/1349314.aspx>

⁷⁵ AAP (2010, October 19), 'Mother jailed for prostituting daughter', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, <http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/mother-jailed-for-prostituting-daughter-20101019-16s8q.html>

The New Zealand experience with decriminalising prostitution has not reduced the underage problem and may have led to an increase.⁷⁷ Queensland's Crime and Misconduct Commission recommended against allowing brothels to provide outcall services due to fears it would increase the demand for illegal services and underage girls in prostitution.⁷⁸ The trend is that rather than curtailing the underage problem, legalisation or decriminalisation systems may lead to an increase in underage prostitution by increasing the demand for sexual services and with it the illegal sector.

Consider the following testimony from a former prostituted woman:⁷⁹

I was in the sex industry for 15 years. During that time it was Northside Studio's that had the bad rep, with Exotic Studio's running a close second . . .

Underage workers back then were a dime a dozen. Managers did everything they could to keep them employed and always covered the I.D part of it. Police raids were always "pencilled in the diary" so Owners knew when to remove the girls from the premises. Many of these young girls came into the industry because they knew someone already working, or had an older partner who paved the way for them. Many already had drug habits and the ones who didn't use drugs, very quickly joined the side which did. They used Speed to stay awake longer and make more money, they used Heroin to take away the emotion of the job, they drank to put on a false mask of happiness and they smoked weed to wind down at the end of the night, only to get up and do it all over again. Most of the owners took on a parental/mentor type role with these young girls, encouraging them to do whatever they had to do to make more money. Often these girls were told how 'lucky' they were to have this opportunity as no other industry could offer a 16/17 yr old \$600 per shift . . . They glamorised the Sex Industry, they built up their egos and they discarded them when they were no longer of any value. By this time these poor girls had already experienced a lifetime of trauma and depression and were not yet even in their 20's . . .

Customers want young girls, it is the most common request all places get. They want new faces, younger, more naive and easier to manipulate. The owners want the regular trade so they give the customers what they want. The only time the sex industry is investigated is times like now, when there has been a death on premises. After the media attention dies down everything will be business as usual again . . .

Trafficking

Ekberg has argued that prostitution and human trafficking are intrinsically tied together and the laws in Sweden have led to a decreased demand for prostitution and a parallel decrease in human trafficking.⁸⁰ The CMC has observed that trafficking is a consequence of a demand-driven industry which cannot protect the vulnerable.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Glaetzer, S. (2010, March 23), 'Girl, 12, sold for sex', *The Mercury*, http://www.themercury.com.au/article/2010/03/23/135701_tasmania-news.html

⁷⁷ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 2

⁷⁸ Schloenhardt (2009), *Happy Birthday Brothels*, p. 18

⁷⁹ The Riot Act (2008, November 5), 'An insider's view of the Canberra sex industry', *The Riot Act*, <http://the-riotact.com/an-insiders-view-of-the-canberra-sex-industry/9573>

⁸⁰ Ekberg (2007), *Update on Swedish Model of Sex Industry Reform*, pp. 2-3

Of the respondents to the West Australian LASH report, just over half (50.9%) were born in Australia. Over a quarter (28.6%) were born in Asian or other non-English speaking countries and almost one out of five reported "fair" or "poor" English language skills.⁸² In Sydney brothels, over half of women (53%) were born in Asia.⁸³ A CSIRO publication reported that in Western Sydney, over 54% of prostituted women were born overseas.⁸⁴

The fact that these figures are substantially higher than for the general population⁸⁵ raises concerns about trafficking for the purposes of prostitution.

The US Department of State reported in 2009 that "some women, primarily from the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Republic of Korea (ROK), and Southeast Asia, entered the country for the purpose of prostitution, sometimes entering with fraudulently obtained tourist or student visas. Many of these women travelled to the country voluntarily to work in both legal and illegal brothels but under conditions that amounted to debt bondage or sexual servitude".⁸⁶

The United Nations' *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* requires States Parties to "take or strengthen measures . . . to alleviate the factors that make persons, especially women and children, vulnerable to trafficking".⁸⁷ This refers to factors such as "poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity".⁸⁸ Collateral factors which may contribute to making women and children vulnerable to trafficking include the inherent inequality of prostitution, which is an industry dominated by female supply and male demand, as well as other factors such as greater susceptibility among women and children to abuse, intimidation, coercion, etc. Poverty is often a contributing factor to a woman's "choice" to work as a prostitute and increases their vulnerability to debt bondage and trafficking. Clearly prostitution is one factor which makes women and children vulnerable to trafficking. As noted above, the United Nations also urges States Parties to take measures to discourage the demand that fosters exploitation which may in turn lead to trafficking.⁸⁹ It is difficult to estimate the number and extent of trafficking victims in the ACT, due in part to the lack of powers the police have to check ID. As discussed, however, there have been known cases of trafficking in the ACT, and it is a constant risk which will always be associated with prostitution.

⁸¹ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 27

⁸² Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 11

⁸³ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 11

⁸⁴ Kakar et al, (2010) *A retrospective case note review of sex worker attendees at sexual health clinics in the western suburbs of Sydney*, CSIRO Publishing, p. 4

⁸⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005), *1301.0 - Year Book Australia*,
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/94713ad445ff1425ca25682000192af2/2D7A4BF79F53D825CA256F7200832F90?opendocument>

⁸⁶ US Department of State (2009), *2009 Human Rights Reports: Australia*,
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eap/135985.htm>

⁸⁷ United Nations, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, Article 9.4.

⁸⁸ United Nations, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, Article 9.4.

⁸⁹ United Nations, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, Article 9.5

Child abuse background of workers

In New Zealand, Maxim Institute has cited a range of New Zealand studies which showed that prostituted women in New Zealand tend to come from very disadvantaged backgrounds and from families with high rates of interpersonal difficulties and parental separation. They were more likely to have suffered high rates of physical abuse, to have left home and school early, have lower qualifications and fewer work opportunities, and have early pregnancy.⁹⁰ Another study used in Maxim's submission "identified participation in prostitution as part of 'a cycle of abuse and disempowerment'".⁹¹

Maxim also conducted interviews with people who assist prostituted women, providing safe houses and helping women leave prostitution. The experience of such people reaffirms what available statistics show – that the main reasons for girls becoming involved in prostitution include disadvantaged histories that include poverty, lack of education, and homelessness, as well as histories of sexual abuse "to the extent that the abuse has become normalised", family breakdown, and a "learned sense of being worthless and of no value".⁹²

There is a similar experience witnessed by social welfare workers and doctors in Sweden. Women who have been prostituted have "lost their self-esteem. There has been a lack of concern for these individuals . . . What they have in common are broken relationships or abuse".⁹³

It is quite reasonable to believe that prostituted women in Australia often come from similar backgrounds.

Inherent inequality in prostitution

Prostitution is overwhelmingly a service provided by women for men. It is inherently unequal in terms of power and control exercised by the male johns and the female prostitutes. It was the concern for gender equality in general that drove reformation of Swedish prostitution laws.

If the ACT is concerned with enhancing respect for women in the community, legalising prostitution is sending the wrong message.

Education

Donovan noted a lack of education resources in Perth brothels,⁹⁴ with only 25% having health education resources for their workers and only one having information for clients. Although these figures were higher in Melbourne (61% and 40%) and Sydney (40% and 5%), health resources and

⁹⁰ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 3, citing Potter, K., Martin, J. & Romans, S. (1999), 'Early developmental experiences of female sex workers: a comparative study', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 33, 935-940

⁹¹ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 3, citing Fitzgerald, P. (1997), *Bridging the Gap: Commercial sexual exploitation of young people in metropolitan Melbourne*, ECPAT Australia; available at http://www.childwise.net/uploads/Bridging_the_Gap.pdf

⁹² Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 8

⁹³ Claude (2010), *Targeting the Sex Buyer*, p. 32

⁹⁴ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 37

information for both those working in prostitution and the men who use them are by no means universal in brothels in those cities.⁹⁵

Exit programmes

Research suggests that leaving the sex industry is an extremely difficult process for prostituted women, despite the fact that a large percentage want to. Research in Queensland suggested that more than 35% of women in legal brothels and sole operators wanted to leave the industry and about half of women on the street wanted to leave.⁹⁶

New Zealand research has estimated that between two thirds and four fifths of prostituted women had tried to leave prostitution, but only 20-25% had been successful in doing so.⁹⁷ Reasons why it is so difficult include alienation from normal support groups, a tendency not to seek assistance, a lack of knowledge of social services, money, sexual abuse, and an inability to plan ahead.⁹⁸

The social stigma surrounding prostitution may be one reason women in prostitution are reluctant to seek assistance. Rather than trying to remove the stigma by legalising the industry, ACL submits that programmes be put in place with the aim of helping prostituted women exit the industry and assist with trauma counselling, drug support, medical support etc.

Advertising

Currently the community is exposed to advertising for brothels and sex workers on the radio, in *The Canberra Times*, and in other public places, including newspapers accessible in schools. Currently there is also a push from the Eros Foundation to liberalise advertising standards in other states and to end "discrimination . . . by the owners and managers of billboard sites and advertising agencies". The visibility of such advertising furthers the culture of acceptance of prostitution as a normal part of everyday life. It also puts children in danger by exposing them to prostitution much too early in life.

Language of legislation

There have also been attempts to change the language in the ACT *Prostitution Act* from "prostitute" to "sex worker" due to the supposed stigma attached to being labelled as a prostitute. The ACL would discourage this as a change in the term "sex worker" is clearly an attempt to have the sex trade seen as a legitimate and normalised industry by sex lobby groups. A more helpful change of language would be from "prostitute" to "prostituted woman/man" as it removes the stigma of the label by not speaking about a person's identity as such, but rather the action involved, while also recognising the third-party involvement in such a damaging industry.

⁹⁵ Donovan (2010), *The Sex Industry in Western Australia*, p. 13

⁹⁶ Crime and Misconduct Commission (2004), *Regulating Prostitution*, p. 21

⁹⁷ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 7

⁹⁸ Maxim Institute (2007), *Submission to the Prostitution Law Review Committee*, p. 7

Conclusion

In preparing this submission the ACL has examined various studies of the nature of the sex industry in a number of jurisdictions. These studies consistently reveal that illegal prostitution continues to thrive even in regions which have regulated the industry. Street prostitution, human trafficking and underage prostitution persist as serious problems despite various regimes which have attempted to mitigate these issues. Regulating part of the industry does not succeed in creating control of the entire industry and the reverse is likely to be true.

Furthermore, the studies reveal that prostitution is, in the majority, harmful to women. It is practised mostly by women from disadvantaged backgrounds who may have few if any employment alternatives. They may be driven to prostitution by poverty or, at times, by other people, usually men. There are numerous serious health risks associated with prostitution, including dangers of severe psychological health problems, high levels of drug use, constant risk of STIs, and violence and abuse from both clients and pimps.

These problems are usually not solved by regulating or decriminalising prostitution and in most cases are worsened. What regulation or decriminalisation does achieve, however, is an increase in social acceptance of prostitution as a valid service for men to seek and expect. It creates a culture which tolerates prostitution as a part of society and perpetuates damaging attitudes towards women by men.

Prostitution is not simply another industry in which women choose to work and which supplies a valid service to the community. In no other industry is an employee worth more the younger and more inexperienced she is. It is an industry rife with abusive and exploitative behaviour and with harmful effects on its employees, but it is also an industry which at its very nature is degrading to all its employees for the purpose of satisfying the physical urges of all its clients.

Prostitution is also not an inevitable problem which cannot be dealt with – an attitude which in part motivates liberalisation of prostitution laws. This is shown by the success of the laws in Sweden which criminalise the purchase of sex, focusing on the demand for sexual services and regarding it as a part of a wider social problem, that of gender inequality and of violence and abuse towards women.

That other countries have replicated or are considering replicating the Swedish approach is evidence of its success, and shows that this approach should be considered in the ACT.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

ACL's recommendations are collated below.

ACL ACT Office

April 2011

Recommendations

The Australian Christian Lobby recommends that the ACT Government:

- Recognise that women are the victims of the prostitution industry and should not be penalised for supplying sexual services.
- Recognise that the demand for sexual services is a form of abuse against women and that men who purchase women for sexual services should be penalised.
- Give serious consideration and study to the Swedish model of prostitution.
- Send a delegation to Sweden, Norway, and Iceland to study their prostitution laws in practice and be educated about the practical workings of the Swedish system.

Although the Australian Christian Lobby believes that regulation is not an ideal system, and that buying prostitution should be targeted and outlawed, ACL makes the following recommendations in the event that the current system of regulation continues:

- That there be stricter regulations on brothel owners and greater powers to authorities to enforce these regulations.
- That, as far as possible, brothels be subject to the same occupational health and safety standards as any other organisation.
- That there be a system of health checks for clients of prostitutes.
- That legal brothels be required to have health education resources for workers and prominently display information on health risks for clients.
- That readily accessible exit programmes exist to assist sex workers leave prostitution.
- That other social programmes such as trauma counselling, drug support, and sexual health services be put in place.
- That there be an examination of the ACT law's ability to protect minors, including ensuring that purchasing underage sex workers be punished.
- That to achieve this the police be given greater powers, including to inspect brothels.
- That the ACT Government consider school education programmes which highlights the dangers of prostitution.
- That there be an investigation into the existence and extent of human trafficking into the ACT for purposes of prostitution.
- That workers be required to be registered before practising prostitution and are educated about health and safety issues in prostitution.
- That workers be required to have been Canberra residents for two years before being registered as prostitutes.
- That there be a clear legislative definition of trafficking to make trafficking easier to identify and police.
- That there be strict restrictions on the form and content of prostitution advertising, such as are in place in Queensland.
- That the ACT Government outlaw sponsorship deals and public listing of brothel companies.