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NEWS REPORT

Headline	Thai sex slaves trafficker jailed
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A GOLD Coast hairdresser who forced two Thai women into sexual slavery to pay off debts to violent loan sharks was yesterday jailed for five years.

Keith William Dobie, 48, was the first person in Australia charged with people trafficking under new laws brought in two years ago to clamp down on international sex slavery.

The former hairdresser yesterday pleaded guilty in the Brisbane District Court to two counts of people trafficking, one count of handling the proceeds of crime, and four counts of presenting false documents.

Dobie lured the Thai women to Australia to work as prostitutes with promises of easy money and generous working conditions, but turned into an abusive and demanding pimp after they arrived, the court was told.

Prosecutor Peter Flanagan, SC, said Dobie secured visas for the women by presenting false immigration documents to Australian officials in Thailand.

Dobie was desperate to repay money he had borrowed from Gold Coast loan sharks for his hairdressing salon and gambling addiction.

The women were both mothers and saw the trip as an opportunity to set up their families financially.

But after arriving on the Gold Coast, the women were forced to see as many as five clients a day, even when in physical pain from frequent sex or menstruating.

Mr Flanagan said Dobie earned up to \$1000 a day from the women, giving them the use of a room and \$20 dollars a day for food and expenses.

He sent as little as \$600 in total to each of the women's families.

Mr Flanagan said Dobie was verbally and physically abusive and he told the women they would be arrested by immigration officials if they tried to escape.

Judge Leanne Clare told Dobie his treatment of the women had been "particularly demeaning and callous".

"Your true intention was to make as much money from these women by working them as often as possible so you could pay off your own debts," she said.

"In your numerous appearances before me I have seen no indication of remorse."

She sentenced him to five years' jail.

He will be eligible for parole after serving 22 months.

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