



HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP

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NEWS REPORT

Headline	Dickson blasts proposed sex laws
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New prostitution laws being flagged by the state government make a mockery of legal brothels and are not based on sound consultation, a Sunshine Coast MP says. The member for Buderim, Steve Dickson, said the Prostitution and Other Acts Amendment Bill was a panicked response to research conducted by a University of Queensland academic and public criticism of Queensland laws.

Mr Dickson criticised the amendment, which would place a raft of limitations on “social escort services”, saying it did not introduce tough enough penalties for pimps running illegal operations.

“It makes a mockery of the system that legal brothels pay upwards of \$30,000 a year in government compliance fees and charges, yet when illegal operators are brought to court they are fined just \$2000,” he said.

Mr Dickson said earlier this month that the illegal sex trade was rife on the Sunshine Coast. He cited as proof recent research that showed only 10% of sex workers operated in legal brothels. The research, led by law academic Associate Professor Andreas Schloenhardt, also showed the remaining 90% of sex workers either worked illegally or in an unregulated environment.

Police minister Neil Roberts said the new laws, flagged to the Daily earlier this month, were a response to 13 of 23 Crime and Misconduct Commission recommendations. Under the proposals, illegal brothel operators could face up to seven years in jail and the possibility of having assets seized. Social escort agencies’ advertisements would be required to carry the words “non-sexual” or “sexual services are not provided”.

Mr Roberts also said powers might be given to police to deal with illegal brothels.

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