



HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP
Dr Andreas Schloenhardt (Coordinator)

The University of Queensland
TC Beirne School of Law

www.law.uq.edu.au/humantrafficking

NEWS REPORT

Headline	Illegal sex ring: women charged
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Author	Anne-Louise Brown
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THREE women have been charged with illegal prostitution offences following a series of raids at Maroochydore on Thursday night.

A spokesman from the Queensland Prostitution Enforcement Taskforce said yesterday nine charges were laid, all relating to the provision of illegal organised prostitution services, as a result of an ongoing investigation into illegal sex rings in the region.

The women will appear in court on November 4.

Paris Satine, owner of Kunda Park brothel Scarlet Harem, said the charges were just the tip of the iceberg.

She believes illegal prostitution is rife in the region and said offenders needed to be punished to create deterrence.

“As the owner of a legal establishment who pays \$30,000 for a licence to operate, I find it insulting that people doing the wrong thing are let off with a tap on the wrist,” Ms Satine said.

“The other big problem with these illegal operations is that there are no guidelines governing sexual health, which is very strictly monitored in legal establishments.

“I’ve noticed in recent months the number of would-be clients with sexually transmitted diseases has gone up dramatically, and I think this has a lot to do with the existence of unmonitored and unregulated illegal sex rings operating on the Coast.”

In June three women and a man were charged over an alleged illegal prostitution racket following raids at Noosa Heads, Mooloolaba, Maroochydore and Caloundra.

More than \$7000 in cash, five mobile telephones and a laptop computer were seized.

In August the member for Buderim, Steve Dickson, criticised proposed changes to the state’s prostitution laws, stating amendments 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,” Mr Dickson said.

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