



**HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP**

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[www.law.uq.edu.au/humantrafficking](http://www.law.uq.edu.au/humantrafficking)

**NEWS REPORT**

<b>Headline</b>	Sex work reform on agenda
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PROSTITUTION law reform will be back on the agenda after the next state election with at least two members of Parliament considering introducing legislation following next year's poll if they are returned.

In addition, the prostitution industry has formed a new lobby group to push for the total legalisation of the industry.

ALP backbencher Steph Key and Family First's Robert Brokenshire are both planning to introduce private member's Bills to revamp prostitution laws, albeit with vastly different outcomes in mind.

Ms Key is aiming to introduce laws aiming at decriminalising prostitution, while Mr Brokenshire wants to introduce laws that would give police greater powers to crack down on the industry.

"Assuming I do win my seat and we get back into government, we will have to talk about what the tactics might be," Ms Key said.

Ms Key said she raised the prospect of law reform after the Rann Government won the 2006 election but "I was told by a couple of ministers, who I won't mention, that this was not a core issue at the moment"

Mr Brokenshire, who was police minister when the Liberal Government tried to change the laws in 2001, said he was advocating a complete criminalisation of the industry.

"The evidence put to me as police minister, and I think it's probably stronger evidence now, is that criminal activity within the prostitution industry is now very strong and it's a huge money-making concern with a lot of illicit drug trafficking," he said. "All we are doing is giving organised crime another fantastic opportunity to make money."

Laws governing prostitution in South Australia are highly complex and have not been changed in more than 50 years, despite legislation being drawn up five times between 1980 and 2001 to modernise the existing laws.

Attorney-General Michael Atkinson does not believe any attempt to change the law will be successful and the current situation where the industry is lightly policed is in the best interests of everyone.

"I think the current law is probably less harmful than all the others," he said.

According to numbers gathered by the Office of Crime Statistics and Research, 69 people were apprehended for owning, conducting or managing a brothel in 1999, but over the next seven years only two people were arrested. By 2008 the number had crept up to eight.

Sex Industry Network manager Ari Reid said new legislation to decriminalise prostitution would help remove the stigma associated with the business.

"It's not a moral issue anymore," she said. "It's been happening in South Australia for ever."

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