



**HUMAN TRAFFICKING WORKING GROUP**

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**CASE REPORT**

Current as on: February 10, 2009

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|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Case Name</b>          | <b><i>R v Geoffrey Crocker</i></b>   |
| <b>Reported in</b>        | <i>R v Crocker</i> [1998] QCA 153<br><i>R v Crocker</i> [1999] QCA 377   |
| <b>Date(s)</b>            | Offences: January 1, 1991-December 20, 1997<br>Appeal: April 16, 1998  |
| <b>Court/Jurisdiction</b> | Court of Appeal, Queensland  |
| <b>Charges</b>            | s 228 <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld): Obscene publications and exhibitions<br>s 229H <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld): Knowingly participating in the provision of prostitution<br>s 231 <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld) (repealed): Bawdy houses (keeping a house for the purpose of prostitution)<br>s 229K <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld): Having an interest in premises used for prostitution<br>s 6 <i>Drugs Misuse Act 1986</i> (Qld): Supplying a dangerous drug<br>s 235 <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld): Keeping a common gaming house<br>s 421 <i>Criminal Code</i> (Qld): Being an accessory after the fact to a breaking and entering |
| <b>Appeal</b>             | 1998   |
| <b>Co-accused</b>         | n/a  |

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## Case Facts

Mr Geoffrey Crocker, along with his wife, owned a number of illegal brothels in Brisbane between 1977 and 1994. Mr Crocker was an associate of the Geraldo Bellino-Vittorio Conte syndicate, and paid protection money through them to the Queensland Police Service.<sup>1</sup> This was later revealed in the 1989 *Fitzgerald Inquiry*<sup>2</sup> into systemic police corruption. Throughout his life Mr Crocker was affiliated with gaming, prostitution and organised crime.

## Convictions

Crocker was initially convicted in 1977 for exhibiting obscene movies. Later that year he was also convicted of keeping a bawdy house (a house used for prostitution), former s 231 *Criminal Code* (Qld) (now repealed).<sup>3</sup> He was convicted of this same offence numerous times in subsequent years: three times in 1978, twice in 1979 and again in 1981. During this period he was 'not seen as a serious offender' and none of these offences attracted a custodial sentence.<sup>4</sup> In 1983, he received 14 days in custody for keeping a common gaming house under former s 235 *Criminal Code* (Qld) (now repealed).<sup>5</sup> In 1989 he was convicted of 16 prostitution related matters, including keeping a bawdy house. For these offences he received three years imprisonment.

Whilst on parole for the 1989 offences he again engaged in the prostitution industry, and was convicted in 1997 of five counts of keeping a bawdy house s 231, two counts of knowingly participating in prostitution s 229H, and a single count of having an interest in premises used for prostitution, s 229K.<sup>6</sup> He was, in effect, sentenced to three years, to be paroled after 30 months. Whilst he was on bail for these charges in the latter half of 1997 he committed a number of drug offences. He was not sentenced for these matters until 1999, when he was sentenced to a total of three and a half years for seven counts of supplying methyl-amphetamine, s 6 *Drugs Misuse Act 1986* (Qld) and a single count of being an accessory after the fact to a breaking and entering, s 421 *Criminal Code* (Qld).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *R v Geraldo Bellino* [1993] QCA 390 at para [17].

<sup>2</sup> Queensland, Report of a Commission of Inquiry pursuant to Orders in Council, *Commission of Inquiry into Possible Illegal Activities and Associated Police Misconduct* (1989).

<sup>3</sup> The bawdy houses offence (keeping a house for the purpose of prostitution), s 231 *Criminal Code* (Qld) was repealed by the *Prostitution Laws Amendment Act 1992* (Qld). The 1992 Act introduced the prostitution offences now found in Chapter 22A *Criminal Code* (Qld). The current equivalent of the former s 231 offence is s 229K, 'having an interest in premises used for prostitution'.

<sup>4</sup> *R v Crocker* [1998] QCA 153 at para [1].

<sup>5</sup> The offence of acting as keeper of gaming houses, betting houses and lotteries, former s 235 *Criminal Code* (Qld) was repealed by the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2005* (Qld), No 70 of 2005.

<sup>6</sup> *R v Crocker* [1998] QCA 153 at para [1]. This offending was over a period between 1991 and 1994 resulting in Crocker being charged with the offence both prior to and subsequent to the *Prostitution Laws Amendment Act 1992* (Qld).

<sup>7</sup> *R v Crocker* [1999] QCA 377 at para [19].