

REGULATING BODIES

AN IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF SEX
WORKERS [SEXUAL SERVICE PROVIDERS] IN
QUEENSLAND'S LICENSED BROTHELS

2017



REGULATING BODIES: AN IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT OF THE NEEDS OF WORKERS IN QUEENSLAND'S LICENSED BROTHELS

There are currently 21 licensed brothels operating in Queensland under the state's regulatory framework. Sexual service providers in licensed brothels appear to be frustrated at the lack of consultation and consideration of their voices and needs within the current framework. The current framework appears to be driven by the morality of those unaffected by the laws rather than inspired by evidence and the rights, health and safety of those who work within Queensland licensed brothels.

Heavy restrictions on advertising, service provision, facilities and excessive mandatory prophylactic barrier laws are some of the issues highlighted by Queensland sex workers in licensed brothels as having negative affects on their work life environment without providing increased protection, security or safety for workers or the community at large.

The data indicates that many Queensland brothel workers are unaware of their rights under the current framework and are being denied the legal benefits of their sub-contractor status. Some workers surveyed indicated that they sometimes felt the need to compromise their own safety and wellbeing in order to work lawfully within the current framework.

The stigmatisation of sex workers and the sex industry continues to result in a majority of sex workers lacking non-judgemental access to essential services such as health care, financial assistance, legal services and housing. Sex workers are not able to seek recourse in instances of assault and their problematic relationships with the police and the PLA are a barrier to accessing justice and advocacy.

Peer education and advocacy represents an effective solution to a lack of sexual health and workplace rights education for sex workers. A concerted effort from the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA) and Queensland Police Service (QPS) is required to address breaches of workplace rights, health and safety occurring in licensed Queensland brothels and the barriers sex workers face to accessing justice.

Consultation with sex workers and peer organisations is key to developing ethical, effective, informed policy for the sex industry.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Respect Inc would like to express gratitude to the 200 sex workers who participated in this project, sharing their invaluable experiences and expertise. Their time, effort and honesty are greatly appreciated and we hope that this report will lead to changes that improve working life for all sexual service providers in licensed brothels in Queensland as well as sex workers throughout Queensland who work in other sectors.

For transparency, we also acknowledge the Prostitution Licensing Authority as the sole funder of this project.



RESPECT INC

Formed in 2009, Respect Inc is Queensland's peer-based sex worker organisation.

Our Mission Statement:

We are Queensland sex workers united to provide a formal medium to communicate sex worker issues and concerns so as to improve the rights of our peers and respond to our workplace health and safety and other needs regardless of gender, age, location, industry sector, legal status, cultural background or linguistic abilities.



ABBREVIATIONS

BBV: Blood-Borne Virus (commonly refers to HIV and viral hepatitis)

Workers: throughout this report the term workers may be used to refer to sex workers / sexual service providers working in licensed brothels in Queensland.

BWNA: the Brothel Worker Needs Assessment project, which informed this report, *Regulating Bodies*

LEU: Licensing Enforcement Unit (Queensland Police Service)

PETF: Prostitution Enforcement Task Force (Queensland Police Service)

PLA: Prostitution Licensing Authority (Department of Justice and Attorney-General)

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment (condoms, dams, latex gloves etc.)

QPS: Queensland Police Service

STI: Sexually Transmitted Infection

The Act: *Prostitution Act 1999* (Qld)

WHO: World Health Organization

TERMINOLOGY

Definition of SEX WORKER

Sex workers include female, male and transgender adults (18 years of age and above) who receive money or goods in exchange for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally.

Sex work is consensual sex between adults, can take many forms, and varies between and within countries and communities.

(World Health Organization, 2016)

Sex workers surveyed for the Brothel Workers Needs Assessment (BWNA) project operate under legislation that refers to them as prostitutes and their work as prostitution. However, Respect Inc uses the term sex worker to refer to all sexual service providers. Sex worker is the preferred term used by sex work organisations, health and human rights organisations and academics globally, including the World Health Organisation, (WHO), United Nations and Amnesty International. Sex worker is an inclusive umbrella term that encompasses all aspects of sexual labour, recognises no race, class or gender, and acknowledges sex work as an

occupational decision (Jeffreys, 2015). For the purposes of this report the definition above has been adopted.

Service provider, brothel worker and sex worker are all terms self-identified by sex workers in Queensland's licensed brothels. These terms are used interchangeably throughout this report. The use of these terms in this report refers only to sex workers in Queensland licensed brothels and is not intended to represent, silence or undermine, the voices or opinions of sex workers who may be working in unlicensed brothels or other modes of sex work in Queensland.'

INTRODUCTION

The practice of sex work in Queensland is regulated by the *Prostitution Act 1999* (Qld); 'The Act' which restricts lawful sex work to licensed brothels and individual sole trading (often known as private work or escorting). This regulatory system which is administered by the PLA and policed by the QPS imposes strict licensing criteria on brothels. These include: restrictions on the number of rooms and service providers allowed at a single establishment; and mandatory barrier laws including use of condoms, dams and gloves for all sexual services including oral sex and masturbation. At May 2017, annual licensing fees start at \$28,075, based on five rooms at \$3,743 each with an annual fee of \$9,360; and in their first year licensed brothels pay an additional \$7,180 application fee (*Prostitution Regulation 2014* (Qld), Schedule 2).

As a result of these restrictions and fees, less than 30 licensed brothels have operated in Queensland since 1999, which constitutes a minor proportion of the sex industry. Upon commencing this needs assessment, a total of 27 licensed brothels were open for business in Queensland but over the duration of the project that number was reduced to 21. The

majority of sex work in Queensland is happening outside of the licensed brothel framework (Edwards, 2009).

'Frequently, discussions about the sex industry and its workers start from the perspective of prostitution as a problem. The "problem" however is often not articulated clearly and a variety of assumptions are made about the nature of the sex industry and the "causes" and consequences of prostitution.'

(Boyle et al., 1997:ix-x).

The Queensland legislation has been criticised as ineffective, as it is based on an incorrect assumption that sex workers in Australia pose a 'high risk' to public health (Banach, 1999; Jeffreys, Fawkes, & Stardust, 2012). Similar regulatory legislation is acknowledged by global health and human rights organisations such as the WHO and World AIDS Organisation to be detrimental to the health and safety of sex workers (Jeffreys et al., 2012; WHO, 2016).

Edwards (2009) asserts that legislation regarding sex work in Queensland was

Peer-based sex work organisations are uniquely qualified to lead research regarding sex workers. Accurate and honest information is essential to high quality research and sex workers are often reluctant to engage fully and openly with non-sex worker bodies. Non-peer researchers may also inadvertently cause harm by engaging in negative stereotyping and harmful tropes when interacting with sex workers; an ethical approach to researching sex workers is always peer-led (Jeffreys, 2010).

underpinned by morality rather than guiding principles and that many specifics of *The Act* are based on preconceptions and assumptions about safety, public health and moral character rather than evidence. This report seeks to contribute to a foundation of evidence based on the experiences of sex workers working under the existing legislation; demonstrating the real-world efficacy of policy.

Since the disbandment of the Prostitution Advisory Council in 2002 there has been no formal body whose focus is to provide policy advice that prioritises the health and safety of sex workers in Queensland (Edwards, 2009). In 2011 the Crime and Misconduct Commission recommended that an Interagency Ministerial Advisory Committee be established to replace the PAC. At that time the CMC called for such an agency with a legislative base to ensure that it did not “suffer the same fate” as the PAC (CMC, 2011:xiii) but this has been ignored by Queensland Governments.

Respect Inc has undertaken an in-depth survey of the needs of workers in licensed

brothels in Queensland and hope that the findings herein may serve some purpose in providing that advice to government. The purpose of this research was to identify the needs of Queensland's licensed brothel workers and subsequently advocate for the workplace rights, health and safety of brothel workers based on the data received.

This report aims to assist the development of effective, informed policy and the maintenance of successful relationships between advocacy bodies and service users.



METHOD

The target group for the BWNA project was people currently working as sexual service providers in licensed brothels in Queensland (current being defined as having worked in the previous twelve month period). A written survey was constructed by peer staff at Respect Inc with experience and expertise specific to working in licensed Queensland brothels (Appendix 3). A multiple choice format was chosen to encourage more participants to answer the survey in full with answer options designed by workers from licensed brothels. However we acknowledge that multiple choice questions can contribute to bias by unconsciously prompting participants. To address this participants were encouraged throughout the interview to express their own unique opinions in relation to each question and individual responses have been included in our report. Questions were developed with consultation from the Respect Inc Management Committee and the PLA with the aim of identifying barriers to the health and safety of the target group. The survey was translated into Chinese, Korean and Thai to increase accessibility by the target group who work in Asian focus licensed brothels in Queensland. Participants were sought from every licensed

brothel in Queensland. With the exception of two Asian focus brothels where a total of just three service providers participated, at each of the other 21 brothels between 5 and 14 service providers participated. The quota of 200 interviews were collected between August 2015 and May 2016, and represented service providers working morning, afternoon and night shifts.

To mitigate response bias arising from stigma or fear of legal repercussions when discussing unlawful work practices, participants were informed that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous. Surveys were completed in individual interviews with sex-worker peer staff from Respect Inc either on brothel premises or at a location chosen by the participant.

Each survey took between fifteen and thirty minutes to complete, allowing time for questions and discussion throughout. A \$30 Coles Myer Gift Card was offered to all participants as remuneration for their time and expertise. Some chose to complete the survey without remuneration.

The BWNA project was funded in its entirety by the PLA via a one-off grant to Respect Inc.

BACKGROUND ABOUT BROTHEL WORK PRACTICES

Work practices vary across licensed brothels in Queensland, un-licensed brothels in Queensland and brothels in Australia more generally. The following background information provides a context for understanding common practices within Queensland licensed brothels.

- **Introductions.** On arrival, clients are seated by the brothel manager in either a private room or open lounge area. Here the client meets the service providers individually or as part of a line-up.
- To **make a booking** with one or more of the service providers, the client pays the manager or receptionist the booking fee. The service provider(s) and client then proceed to one of the rooms for the duration of the booking.
- **Health checks.** An inspection of the client's genitals is conducted by the service provider at the start of each booking to check for any visible signs of a sexually transmitted infection (STI). This is usually done before the client showers and the service provider may leave the room while the client is in the shower.
- **Booking** lengths are most commonly 30, 45 or 60 minutes, however they can vary from 15 minutes to multiple hours.
- A **standard service** usually includes massage, oral sex (on the client) and vaginal intercourse.
- Service providers **do not receive a wage** as they are not 'employees', but rather 'independent contractors' and they usually receive 40-60% of the fee charged for a booking. The brothel's cut is referred to as the 'room fee' or the 'house fee'.
- Sometimes, especially during peak periods, service providers may be **required to pay shift fees** to the house, regardless of whether they complete any bookings.
- Service providers are **sometimes fined or denied shifts** for offences such as not attending an introduction, leaving early or arriving late to a shift.
- **Rooms are cleaned**, usually by service providers at the end of each booking.
- **Laundry** is often done by brothel managers/receptionists and/or service providers between bookings.
- **Preferred shifts.** Service providers usually submit their shift requests to management on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis. Depending on how busy the brothel is, and how many other service providers are working, managers do not always honour these requests.
- **Client** traffic varies between shifts. Weekend night and grave shifts are usually the busiest.

RESULTS

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The 200 participants in the study were all female, and although there are active male and transgender sex workers in Queensland none was present at the licensed brothels during the research period nor included in the study.

In a question asking about their age, 24 (12%) of participants did not respond, and none selected the '70 years plus' bracket. Of those who responded, 148 (74% of all participants) were between 18 and 40 years of age. See Appendix A: Table A1.

In response to a question about their main language / originating culture, all but one participant responded, and of those who responded, 80% selected English or European, 5% Korean, 5% Thai, with smaller representation from Filipino, Chinese, Indian and seven other cultures. See Appendix A: Table A2.

The majority of participants (60%) reported they currently worked in Brisbane area, with a further 21% on the Gold Coast and 7% on the Sunshine Coast, 4% each in Cairns,

Toowoomba and Townsville. Brothels in Mount Isa and Mackay closed prior to data collection. See Appendix A, Table A3.

Most participants (64%) had been working in licensed Queensland brothels for less than one year, with 32% working between one and four years, and 4% over five years. See Appendix A, Table A4.

RESULTS

2. OCCUPATIONAL MOTIVATION

Participants were asked their reason for starting sex work, using a multiple choice question permitting multiple responses. Most participants (94%) selected one or more responses that related to earning money: earn more money (45%), unemployment (26%) pay for education (24%), support family/children (24%), save money (17%), pay off a debt (17%) and support a partner (4%). Non-financial reasons for starting work were curiosity (29%), started as a stripper (15%) and sexual fulfilment/enjoyment (12%). See Appendix B, Table B1.

Of the 34 participants who identified debt as a motivator, just 5 (15%) indicated that they planned to cease sex work once their debt was paid. See Figure 1.

When asked to select the reason or reasons they chose brothel work, over other sex work, 45% of participants said that brothel work paid better than their previous jobs, and 42% said someone recommended it to them. A further 42% of participants said they chose brothel work because it was safer (than other modes of sex work such as private work, escort agencies or street work). In Queensland private sex workers are prohibited from working together, even in split shifts or to provide security or administrative support to

each other, and escort agencies are prohibited, so brothel work provides the only legal opportunity for sex workers to work together. Working legally with other service providers was a motivation for 37% of participants. Only 25% of participants chose brothel work because of the facilities, and 18% because of good working conditions. See Appendix B, Table B2.

‘Do you intend to stop sex work when your debt is paid off?’

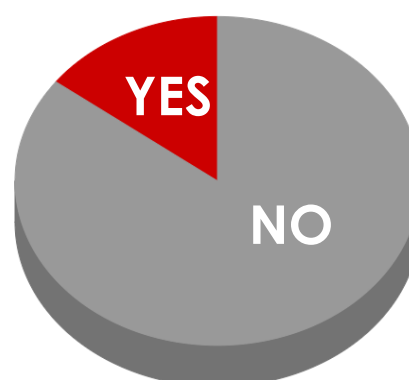


Figure 1. Only 15% of brothel workers who identified debt as a motivation for entering the sex industry indicated they planned to cease sex work once their debt was paid.

RESULTS

3. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

I. TRAINING & INDUCTION

Most participants reported receiving training on how to perform a sexual health check (84%) and the laws regarding use of condoms and personal protective equipment (PPE) (83%) when starting work at a licensed brothel. Many were given guidance on negotiating bookings (62%), but less were given information about their workplace rights including their right to refuse client introductions or sexual services (57%), or contact information for PLA (51%), or Respect Inc (49%). See Table 1.

In a further question about adequacy of training, 33% of participants responded that they did not consider their training sufficient, and 68% said they actively supplemented their induction training with information from peers, peer-organisations and the internet.

When asked about who conducted their training many participants (45%) said their training was conducted by another service provider instead of or in conjunction with training provided by management.

Table 1. Types of training provided upon commencing work in a licensed brothel in Queensland

Type of Training	No. of Answers	% of Participants
How to do a sexual health check (logistics - e.g., using a light/gloves)	167	84%
Laws: condoms and PPE	166	83%
Identifying STIs visually	147	74%
STI & BBV transmission modes	141	71%
Brothel-specific policy information	140	70%
Negotiating bookings & boundaries	138	69%
Dealing with difficult clients & situations	122	61%
Fire Safety	116	58%
Rights: refusing introductions, clients or specific services	114	57%
Contact information for the PLA	102	51%
Contact information for Respect Inc	97	49%
Contact information for the LEU	76	38%
Other	12	6%

RESULTS

*'The training here is provided
courtesy of other service
providers. If they do not like you,
you learn nothing and it is
scary.'*

*'The most valuable information
has come from my peers.'*

II. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND SEXUAL HEALTH INSPECTIONS

A sexual health inspection of a client's genitals is conducted by the service provider as an STI safety precaution before sexual activity commences. If a service provider is uncertain about whether a skin condition is an STI, they may seek a second opinion. When participants were asked about sexual health checks, 45% of participants said they were not comfortable obtaining a second opinion from management, and 15% of participants said they were not comfortable obtaining a second opinion from peers.

When asked about prophylactics (condoms, dams, gloves) and lubricants, most participants (95%) said they were adequately supplied with condoms and lubricant by the brothel. Many were uncertain what prophylactics were required by law, and 36% said they thought Queensland brothels had excessive safer sex strategies and referred to the requirements for gloves and dams.

*'Dams [are excessive]: would
you want to lick that?'*

'Gloves are a bit much.'

RESULTS

III. SEXUAL HEALTH

Sexual service providers working in licensed brothels in Queensland are required to obtain certificates of attendance for sexual health screenings every three months. (*The Act*, s. 90; *Prostitution Regulation*, s14)

Over a third of participants (36%) said that the procedures followed for certificates of attendance were inconsistent when they attended different health providers. Participants indicated that GPs often did not understand the process for providing a certificate of attendance, did not perform the appropriate required tests, treated them in a discriminatory manner or even refused them service due to their sex worker status.

'Some GP's are thorough and some just want you out of their office because you are a sex worker...'

'Different procedures everywhere. One GP I went to didn't even do a visual. Just smiled, nodded and handed me the cert...'

'I often have to advise GP's. Often GP's don't or won't do the health certificate.'

3. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

Most participants (90%) had been asked at least once for sex without a condom, with 11% being asked most or all the time. Despite that, when asked about their usual response, only one participant said they would 'do the job regardless' if sex without a condom was requested; 57% of participants would talk the client into using

condom or provide an alternative service. To a request for sexual service without a dam, three participants would proceed regardless and 80% would negotiate. Five participants would provide a sexual service without a glove on request and 60% would negotiate instead.

Usual response to requests for sex without a condom

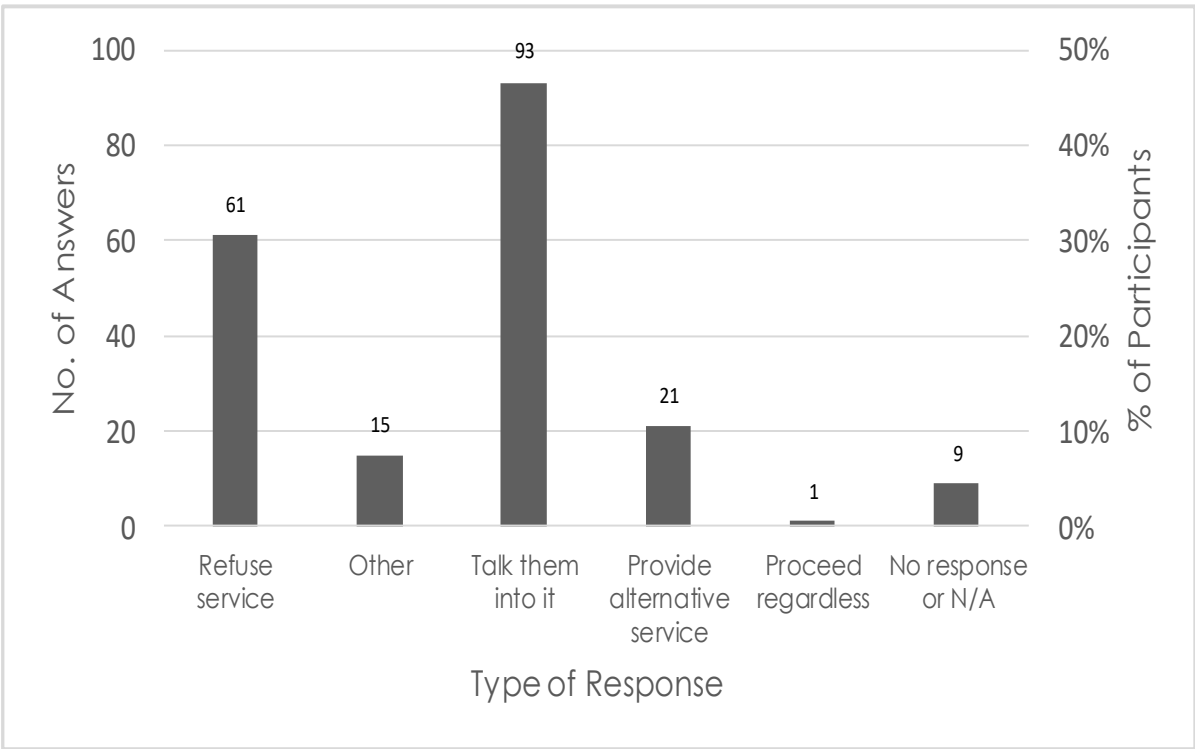


Figure 2. Type of response by sex workers who were asked to provide sex without a condom at work in licensed Queensland brothels .

RESULTS

IV. WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

An open-ended question was asked about ways to improve the workplace, and the high participant response rate (73%) without multiple choice options, evidenced the strong opinions held. Responses were categorised into key themes and are outlined in Table 2.

Improved facilities was important to 30% of participants, who suggested larger and better supplied staff/back-of-house areas, better ventilation and light, Wi-Fi access, and updated facilities. Training management to be more supportive and less coercive was suggested by 20%, and several participants suggested that only current or ex-sex workers should be allowed to work as licensed brothel managers to avoid harassment and exploitation. Less restrictive, and increased advertising was important to 15% of participants, and 13% identified increased security, and 12% increased cleanliness.

Increased shift flexibility, such as shorter shifts, and more rooms and service providers were both noted by 8% of participants. Queensland licensed brothels are prohibited from having more than 5 rooms or 8 service providers on shift (*The Act*, s.72) in contrast

with larger interstate brothels. Typically the licensed brothel takes approximately 50% of fees charged, and increased rates or percentage of fees was identified by 7% of participants. Alcohol licensing is permitted in brothels in other states, but prohibited in Queensland (*The Act*, s83) and 5% of participants noted it as a factor to significantly improve the workplace. Among the other factors noted, more and better quality cameras were suggested by 3% of participants. In this context cameras refer to video cameras usually placed at the entrance and reception, with viewing screens for service providers to identify clients prior to meeting them at an introduction.

Unlike other Australian states, Queensland law also prohibits licensed brothels from providing outcalls or 'escort services' where the sex worker visits the client at a location outside the brothel, such as a hotel room (*The Act*, s78). In response to a question about whether they would be interested in the option of doing outcalls from the brothel 75% of participants were interested, with 27% also suggesting specific safety measures.

3. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

'Put windows in. I feel like a vampire on day shift.'

'[The] brothel should not decide my rate, I should decide. They should only set room hire fee.'

Table 2. Factors that would significantly improve the workplace as identified by sex workers in licensed brothels in Queensland

Factors that would significantly improve the workplace	No. of Answers	% of Participants
Improved facilities (larger and better supplied staff areas, better ventila-	60	30%
Improved management (more supportive, less coercive, better trained)	39	20%
Better or less restricted advertising (due to the law)	29	15%
Increased security	25	13%
Improved cleanliness, sanitation and quantity/quality of supplies (such	23	12%
Increased shift flexibility (shorter shifts)	16	8%
More rooms/service providers on shift	16	8%
Increased rates or increased cut of fee	14	7%
Alcohol licensing	9	5%
Increased interaction with Respect Inc	6	3%
Better access to stigma-free health testing	6	3%
More and better cameras	5	3%
Increased privacy (particularly parking facilities)	4	2%
Better training for new service providers	3	2%

RESULTS

In response to a question about whether they had worked in an Australian brothel outside Queensland, 32% of participants said they had. In answer to a follow-up question about the advantages and disadvantages of interstate work 48% of the 52 participants who responded identified liquor licensing, extra rooms/service providers on shift, or better advertising (more clients) as significant advantages to working in NSW, where sex work is decriminalised and brothels are largely unregulated.

Participants were asked if they would like to see any laws regarding the regulation of Queensland brothels changed, and 107 (54%) said they would. An open-ended question about the desired changes yielded responses from 92 of the 107 participants, and those have been categorised in Table 3.

Legislative changes sought by participants were largely removal of restrictions: on outcalls (16%); on number of rooms and service providers (16%); on alcohol on premises (10%); on industrial zoning (5%); and on advertising (4%). Full decriminalisation was suggested by 7%, and implementation

Table 3. Laws and regulations where change is needed

Desired area of legislative change	No. of Answers
Prohibition of outcalls removed	31
Restrictions on number of rooms / service providers on shift removed	31
Prohibition of alcohol on premises removed	20
Implementation of full decriminalisation	13
Industrial zoning of brothels no longer required	9
Restrictions on advertising removed	8
Minimum fee split/ rate implemented	7

of a minimum fee split rate was suggested by 4% of participants.

In response to a question about advertising, 54 participants (27%) said their brothel was not promoted adequately, and 21 participants (11%) attributed inadequate promotion to restrictive advertising laws in Queensland.

3. WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

V. VIOLENCE AND ASSAULT

Responding to whether they had ever been physically or sexually assaulted at work, 48 (24%) of participants said they had. Of those who had experienced that assault only 26 (54%) said they had reported it to management. Only 10 (38%) of those who reported it to management were satisfied with management's response.

'I didn't want [management] to think I was starting trouble as the client was a friend to them.'

'Not much point. [management] don't really care anyway.'

When asked if they would make a complaint to police if they were assaulted at work, only 91 participants (46%) said they would, and 99 participants (50%) said they would not. In an open-ended follow up question to those who would not report an assault to police, 45 (66% of those who answered) identified stigma and a concern that their privacy would be compromised if they provided police with their personal details, and 26 (38% of those who answered) said they mistrusted police, their competence, the legal system and/or anticipated discrimination.

'Because [the police] don't take us seriously. They think we are asking for any trouble we get.'

'[The Police] don't care, you wouldn't be taken seriously.'

'Not much point - the experience of workers who report is that it's horrible, no one believes you, you get treated badly and if it goes to court you lose.'

'Because I wouldn't be treated the same way as others.'

'Mainly for privacy reasons, I wouldn't want that I work in a brothel on a police file.'

RESULTS

VI. SECURITY

In response to a question asking if they were satisfied with security measures at the brothel, 156 participants (78%) said they were satisfied.

However in a further question about what would improve general safety at work, 65% of participants identified one or more areas of workplace safety that could be improved. Suggested improvements included provision of personal and room alarms (31%), employing security guards (25%), better quality cameras and screens to view clients (24%), more cameras (9%) and improved parking and lighting (6%). Other suggestions

included improving management, various self-defense options and not locating brothels in industrial zones.

When asked if participants had reported any safety concerns to management, 53% of all participants said they had done so. Only four participants (2%) said their concerns had been acted on, and four participants said that brothels were restricted by law and not allowed to hire security personnel. However, *The Act* does not prohibit brothels employing licensed security guards, and PLA has advised Respect Inc that there is no such restriction on brothels.

RESULTS

4. WORK LIFE SATISFACTION & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

I. WORKING WITH COLLEAGUES

Participants were asked if they had done other modes of sex work (such as private work/sole operator, escort agencies, street and opportunistic sex work) and 65 participants (33%) indicated they had. Private work was most frequently identified. Participants who had experienced private work, in Queensland or interstate, identified higher rates of pay as the main advantage of private work and they perceived increased safety and working with colleagues as the main advantages of licensed brothel work.

Consistently cited disadvantages of licensed brothel work were lack of autonomy and lack of flexibility, due to management. Isolation, loneliness and perceived insecurity due to working alone were the main disadvantages of private work. Of those who compared brothel work with private work, 62% expressed a preference for working with other sex workers.

'Private work is scary when you are by yourself.'

'Brothels are much safer because you have other girls to watch your back.'

'Friendships, companionship, support [and] security [are advantages of brothel work].'

RESULTS

II. ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

When asked if they felt as though there were barriers for themselves, as sex workers, to access services, 129 participants (65%) said there were. A further 7 participants did not respond to the question, but answered the follow up question about which services had barriers to access, suggesting they also perceive barriers. Services with barriers to sex workers were identified by 135 participants (68%). Most frequently identified was housing, then finance, medical care, taxation, social services, legal service, child care and schooling. See Table 4.

When asked if they had anyone outside of their workplace who they could tell they were a sex worker, 101 participants (51%) said they did (51%) but 92 (46%) did not, and 7 did not respond. Of the 101 participants who said they did have someone to disclose their occupation to, 56 (55%) said it helped them keep a healthy lifestyle and more balanced life.

Table 4: Types of essential service that sex workers in licensed brothels identified as those they have difficulty accessing due to their occupation.

Type of Service	No. of Answers	% of Participants
Housing (renting/ buying property)	111	56%
Financial (loans, accountants, tax advice, bookkeeping)	92	46%
Medical Care	91	46%
The Australian Tax Office	89	45%
Social (Centrelink)	82	41%
Legal (police assistance, lawyers, legal aid)	80	40%
Childcare	58	29%
Public or Private Schools	55	28%
Other	16	8%

4. WORK LIFE SATISFACTION & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Do you feel there are barriers for you as a sex worker to access services?

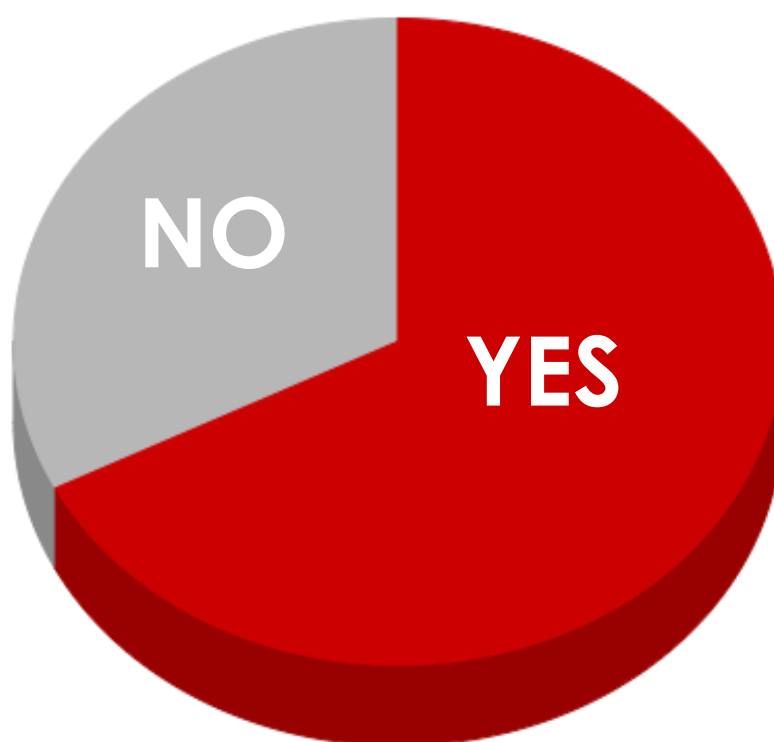


Figure 3. 135 participants (68%) identified essential services where they faced barriers to access due to their occupation as sex workers.

RESULTS

III. RESPECT INC

Participants were asked an open-ended question to identify three of the most important things that they thought Respect Inc could provide them.

A higher level of general support and advocacy was suggested by 34% of participants; sex work specific skills training, in the form of workshops or one-on-one coaching was suggested by 23%; career guidance and general job skills by 15%, sexual health education (15%). See Table 5.

In response to a question asking about their interest in workshops on eight different identified topics, participants selected the following:

STI identification (57%), Financial skills (57%), Managing emotional wellbeing/burnout (53%), BDSM skills (45%), Career development (43%), Resume writing & interview skills (40%), Introduction to sex work/new-worker induction (34%), Sex-work art & performance (32%) and other (9%).

It is interesting that only a small number of workers in licensed brothels identified political

lobbying or legislative change as something that Respect Inc could assist them with despite indicating elsewhere that legislative restrictions were onerous.

Table 5. Types of services identified by sex workers in Queensland licensed brothels as beneficial when asked how Respect Inc might best be able to serve them in the future with increased funding for brothel-specific services.

Type of Service	No. of Answers	% of Participants
General Support / Advocacy	68	34%
Sex Work Skills Training	45	23%
Career Guidance / Job Skills	30	15%
Sexual Health Education/Information	30	15%
Social Events / Peer Support	25	13%
Financial Skills Training	22	11%
Political Lobbying / Legislative Change	9	5%

RESULTS

5. WORKPLACE RIGHTS & THE LAW

I. COERCION & UNFAIR DISMISSAL

In response to whether their workplace allowed them to refuse clients, 57 participants (29%) said that licensed brothel management did not always allow them to refuse clients. In a further question about feeling pressured by management to see a client they were not comfortable with, 97 participants (49%) said they had or might have been pressured.

‘[Management] make you feel like you have no choice. You have to intro all clients even if you are sleeping or tired or eating or whatever.’

‘I was not allowed to refuse as ‘he was a loyal customer and wants you, so get comfortable with him’.’

‘[Management] said it was my job to see any client.’

‘We are not allowed to refuse [clients] if we want to work here.’

‘Even when the client is really drunk and I don't feel comfortable [I am pressured to see them]’

‘[I was told to] “stop being a princess”.’

RESULTS

When they tried to refuse a client, 47 participants (24%) said that they were penalised. As examples of penalisation they mentioned being taken off the roster (sometimes indefinitely), being sent home and being excluded from introductions.

After a health inspection consultation (second check) with management where the presence of an STI was in question, 63 participants (32%) said that they had felt pressured by licensed brothel management to perform a service against their will.

'The owner tried telling me that a condom would cover the warts so I had nothing to worry about.'

'There are two managers here who guilt you into seeing the client, or at least try to.'

'I was asked to "do it or go home".'

'I was told I had to see him - no other girls available.'

'[Management] tried to guilt me into taking the booking because "business was quiet".'

5. WORKPLACE RIGHTS & THE LAW

II. CONTRACTS

When asked if they were allowed to do private work on the side while working at the licensed brothel, 62 participants (31%) said that they had been expressly informed by management that they were not allowed to do private or other modes of sex work (including sex work at other brothels) whilst working there. When asked further about their understanding of that prohibition, 36 participants (18%) reported that they believed they would be penalised if they participated in any sex work outside the brothel; they would be fired, taken off the roster, fined or have their shifts reduced.

'I was told by the owner, not to come back for any more shifts once she had seen me on another [escort] website.'

When asked about whether the licensed brothel management treated them as independent contractors, 94 participants (47%) said they felt they were treated as independent contractors; 103 participants (52%) said they were not, or not consistently, or that they didn't understand what an independent contractor was. Both participants who answered yes and those who answered in the negative expressed confusion about the difference between being independent contractor and an employee and/or could not identify the differences.

'I have no right to work when I want. I am required to include certain things in my service (sex/massage/oral) which should be my choice. And I am told how much I get paid for a basic service.'

'Not all girls understand that they are a contractor, even after they have been told.'

'[We are] more like casual staff.'

'We are treated as employees.'

'Only when it works in [management's] favour i.e. not having to pay a wage. But we're not independent because they control the roster.'

RESULTS

III. RATES/FEES

In Queensland, licensed brothels set the service prices charged to clients. In response to a question about the service prices set, 102 participants (51%) said they were unhappy with the prices set by their brothel.

In Queensland licensed brothels the service provider usually receives between 40-60% of the service price paid by the client, with a 50% split being common. When asked about the percentage split, 101 participants (51%) said they were unhappy with the percentage of the fee they received as the service provider. Participants indicated that a minimum split of 60:40 in favour of the service provider would be more appropriate.

IV. UNDERSTANDING THE LAW

In response to a question that asked if participants were aware of their legal rights as a sex worker in Queensland, 59 participants (30%) said they are unsure of or are not aware of their legal rights.

In response to a question that asked participants to identify which bodies make the rules regarding use of PPE in Queensland brothels, 47 participants (24%) correctly identified some or all of the sources of mandatory barrier laws.

In response to a question asking who they believe makes the rules about keeping a copy of service provider ID upon induction at the brothel, 127 participants (64%) said they believed the PLA mandated it.

5. WORKPLACE RIGHTS & THE LAW

V. THE PLA

The PLA was established to regulate prostitution in Queensland under *The Act*. It declares its mission as 'to ensure that brothels are licensed and regulated in the community interest'. It is further committed to promoting safety and health in the sex industry and in the wider community (PLA, 2016).

When asked how they heard about the PLA, 41 participants (21%) said they had not been given information about the PLA by licensed brothel management. Instead, they learned about the PLA from peers, the internet or Respect Inc. Five participants said they had not heard of the PLA before the survey for the needs assessment.

In response to a question about the purpose of the PLA, 62 participants (31%) correctly identified the role and/or responsibilities of the

public health or broader personal health and wellbeing. Advocacy was identified by 16 participants (8%) as the primary purpose of the PLA, indicating a misconception that the PLA acts on behalf of sex workers in legal discrimination cases and/or promotes sex workers' rights in a lobbying or political context. Other participants (6%) confused the PLA with QPS; many of the sex workers who indicated that they did not know the purpose of the PLA were unsure whether the PLA were 'the same thing' as the police. See Table 6, overleaf.

Of the 19 participants (10%) who said they had contacted the PLA, 11 of them (58%) said they did not find the PLA helpful.

‘Very professional [but] not very relatable...’

PLA as regulation/legislation regarding the sex industry and 48 participants (24%) identified the PLA as protecting sex workers or ensuring their safety. When participants referred to safety, they tended to refer to personal physical safety rather than population-wide

RESULTS

Table 6. The primary purpose and/or responsibilities of the PLA as identified by sex workers in licensed brothels in Queensland

Purpose and Responsibilities of PLA	No. of Answers	% of Participants
Don't know / no answer	69	35%
To regulate and/or legislate regarding the sex industry	62	31%
To protect sex workers / to ensure safety	48	24%
To harass or extort sex workers (corruption)	18	9%
Sex worker advocacy (rights, lobbying)	16	8%
To enforce legislation (act as or in cooperation with QPS)	12	6%

'I contacted [The PLA] when [my brothel] kept my money for 3 days. I never heard from them again.'

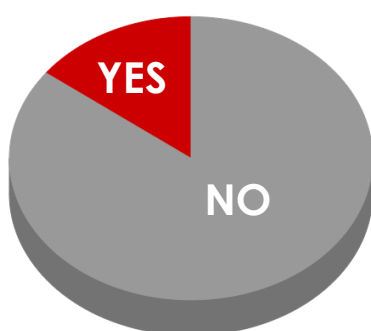
'[The PLA] were rude when they realised I was a worker.'



DISCUSSION

Workers in licensed brothels described a diverse range of motivations for commencing sex work at licensed brothels in Queensland including savings goals, funding study, curiosity and sexual fulfilment. That many sex workers are motivated by money in their profession should come as no surprise to anyone who understands financial reward as the motivation for work in general. The damaging victim trope so often applied to sex workers in the media and even in academia is largely unsupported by evidence (Harcourt & Donovan, 2005; Donovan, 2012). *Regulating Bodies* provides further evidence that people working in the sex industry in Queensland share similar motivations and commence work under similar circumstances to those in other industries.

‘Do you intend to stop sex work when your debt is paid off?’



‘Brothels are much safer because you have other girls to watch your back’

Participants who were motivated to enter the sex industry by debt stated their intention to stay in the industry once their debt was paid off. Despite the negative depiction of sex work by the media, the majority of people who commence work in the sex industry find the reality of sex work to be advantageous; not requiring the pressure of financial debt to motivate their continued work in the industry.

We found the majority of participants who had considered other modes of sex work perceived brothels to be a safer working environment and chose to work in-house for security reasons despite often describing a preference for private work. Many sex workers (74) described a preference for working with colleagues and indicated they had primarily chosen in-house work in order to facilitate working together legally, motivated by increased security and general

DISCUSSION

wellbeing. The discrepancy between brothels *facilitating* a preferred group work environment and in themselves being a safe and productive work environment is demonstrated by the low number (36) who indicated they chose their workplace based on 'good working conditions'.

The survey results indicate that training and induction provided by management in licensed brothels is inadequate with 16% of workers indicating they were not shown how to conduct a sexual health check and 26% not given sufficient training in recognising STIs or regarding the transmission of STIs and BBVs. Less than 60% received information regarding their rights and only around 50% were given information regarding Respect Inc or the PLA, which may be considered the equivalent of having access to formal human resources channels in a workplace. Of those who did

33% of participants said they did not think their training was sufficient and 68% said they actively supplemented their training and induction by brothel management with information from peers, peer-organisations and the internet.

receive training information upon induction, many listed peers as their main resource rather than management.

Sex workers in Australia have consistently displayed lower rates of STIs and BBVs than the general population (Jeffreys et al., 2012) and very high levels of condom use (Daniel, 2010) which is in sharp contrast to the frequent public portrayal and understanding of sex workers as a public health risk. Only one sex worker suggested they might perform sex without a condom when asked or pressured to by a client. The vast majority say they consistently choose to refuse service or negotiate safer sex practices. Most sex workers indicated they were regularly asked to perform services without PPE making negotiation and an awareness of their rights a crucial element of workplace health and safety for sex workers. However negotiation is often overlooked in favour of more clinical health training; negotiation is almost always learned 'on the job' or when an opportunity arises to learn from peers, putting sex workers' health at risk.

Peer education is widely acknowledged by the sex work community (with support from global health organisations) to be the most effective method of education in the sex industry due to the unique insights sex workers have into the needs of other sex workers and their ability to overcome barriers to communication created by stigma (Campbell & Mzaidume, 2001;

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Mawulisa, 2002; Rekart, 2006; Ziersch, Gaffney, & Tomlinson, 2000; WHO, 2016). Sexual health information disseminated by non-peers is unlikely to be easily applicable by sex workers to their work environments; it is imperative for the success and safety of sex workers that they be able to implement their safety and health knowledge in informal ways. A clinical approach is not helpful (Scarlet Alliance, 2000).

Peer education has the added benefits of creating avenues of support for sex workers and developing connections within the sex work community. The isolation and stigma of doing sex work are frequently cited as the most difficult aspects of working in the industry and critical barriers to effective health initiatives (Scambler, 2008; Seib, 2007:43, 179; Rekart, 2006). Building networks of support are critical not just for improving workplace health and safety but to safeguard the mental and emotional health of sex workers.

Workers in licensed brothels consistently describe a desire to work together in a legal setting; it is key to improving their physical safety, perceived sense of safety, autonomy and work life satisfaction as well as being an

ideal mechanism for facilitating peer education and community support.

Further supporting the strength of peer support and education, workers in licensed brothels indicated they are far more comfortable getting a second health check from peers than from management. Not only have they indicated that management do not have the necessary skill to perform health checks, they also fear being coerced to take bookings that put their health at risk.

GPs and existing sexual health services are not meeting the needs of sex workers in Queensland. The law mandates that licensed brothel workers be tested for STIs and BBVs frequently but we found that many of them are not able to access regular testing. Those service providers who visit GPs for their tests report facing discrimination and incorrect testing procedures which puts both their

Participants indicated that GPs often did not understand the process of obtaining a certificate of attendance, did not perform the appropriate required tests, treated them in a discriminatory manner or even refused them service due to their sex worker status.

‘Developing comprehensive sexual health promotion programmes requires a complete understanding of the types of sex work in a particular area.’

(Harcourt & Donovan, 2005).

physical and emotional/mental health at risk. Stigma and persistent negative attitudes towards sex workers continue to be a significant barrier to accessing health and other essential services.

Stigma and discrimination also present a barrier to justice and legal services. Over half of the workers in licensed brothels who had experienced assault at work said they had not reported it to management indicating management was either not concerned or would penalise them. Almost 50% of workers indicated they would not report assault to the police for similar reasons, often saying they ‘would not be taken seriously’ or that they were concerned about confidentiality. Not only does this lack of recourse impact the mental and emotional health of workers in licensed brothels, it also sends a message to the public that assaults against sex workers will not incur recourse or penalty, which mirrors the public attitude at large and poses a risk to the general safety of sex workers. This has been illustrated by the disparate sentencing of perpetrators of crimes against sex workers in Australia (Green, 2016).

Sex workers face significant barriers to accessing essential, everyday services due to their lawful

occupation. The Queensland government fails to provide adequate protection from discrimination for sex workers and this can have disastrous consequences for the health, safety and quality of living of sex workers. Ensuring access to health services is an essential aspect of all public health strategies; sex workers are a key target group for the Queensland government’s STI and BBV prevention and treatment strategies, yet these strategies will remain ineffective until sex workers can access sexual health services without fear of discrimination.

One hundred and thirty five participants (68%) identified barriers they faced to accessing essential services such as medical care, legal and financial services and childcare.

Barriers to justice and legal assistance are particularly concerning given the high rate of coercion and breach of independent contractor rights described in this report. Many participants indicated that they believe it is the PLA’s role to act on behalf of sex workers in these instances and that that role is not performed well. In this void of support with sex workers being

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ignored or even punished by their managers, unable to approach the PLA, the police and other primary service providers, the role of peer organisations in providing support, education and assistance in a wide range of areas is particularly clear. It is apparent that there is a lack of trust between workers in licensed brothels and the PLA and QPS with many workers having trouble distinguishing between the two agencies. Further the PLA and QPS as they stand are not equipped with the skills or an approach to interact with workers in licensed brothels in a supportive capacity, including in instances of assault.

Nearly half of the participants (99) said they would not make a complaint to the police if they were assaulted at work.

A significant number of workers in licensed brothels identified issues with their work environment that also constitute a health and safety risk. A lack of light and ventilation as well as inadequate facilities and sanitation is

concerning, particularly considering many brothels require a minimum shift of 8 hours and due to zoning laws are often restricted to industrial areas where there are no retail outlets or facilities nearby. Licensed brothels were not found to be workplaces that prioritised the safety, security and wellbeing of their sexual service providers; higher quality camera systems are a priority need for workers in licensed brothels to ensure their physical safety as well as their mental and emotional health.

Almost 30% of participants (59) said they are unsure of or are not aware of their legal rights as a sex worker working in a licensed brothel.

It is clear that very few workers in licensed brothels have a thorough understanding of their rights as sex workers and as independent contractors according to the law.

Under Queensland law, sex workers in licensed brothels are operating as independent contractors and brothel license conditions state that:

‘[Licensees and approved managers

DISCUSSION

must] not either, directly or indirectly, compel a sex worker against their wishes to provide an introduction, to see a client or to provide a particular service.' (PLA, 2010, p16-17).

Further licensing conditions state:

'Licensees and approved managers must observe the rights of a sex worker as an independent party. This includes not coercing, directing, bullying, threatening or unfairly penalising a sex worker by whatever means, express or implied.' (PLA, 2010, p16-17)

Our results indicate that these requirements are subject to non-compliance with workers stating that they experience bullying and manipulation with regards to service provision and have conditions placed on their independent

57 participants said that brothel management did not always allow them to refuse clients. Almost half of the participants (97) said they had been pressured, or might have been pressured by management to see a client they were not comfortable with.

Several workers suggested only current or ex-sex workers should be allowed to work as brothel managers to avoid harassment and exploitation.

contracts as standard practice. Workers in licensed brothels are not receiving the benefits of employment such as superannuation, sick leave, workcover and job security but are being subjected to the restrictions of casual employment, and further, are being bullied and harassed.

Coercion by and inadequate training of management is an issue requiring attention in Queensland's licensed brothels. Our results suggest that the existing licensing system, though (perhaps overly) stringent, is not designed in a way that ensures appropriate management is employed and trained.

Workers in licensed brothels were found to have a poor understanding of the laws governing the use of PPE by sex workers. Although *The Act*, s.77A states 'A prostitute must not provide prostitution involving sexual intercourse or oral sex unless a prophylactic is used', by contrast Brothel Licensing Condition 4.5 states that brothel licensees must, 'Have

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arrangements in place to ensure that prophylactics are used for intercourse, oral sex and hand relief. Sex workers and staff must be made aware of this brothel licence condition through induction.' Thus there is an additional condition placed upon workers in licensed brothels to use PPE for hand relief that is not required by private sex workers under *The Act*.

Participants indicated that these conditions, requiring condoms or gloves for hand relief, were detrimental to the quality of the service provided. Insisting on excessive PPE makes it difficult for workers to negotiate effectively with the client.

Hand relief and oral sex (mouth-to-vagina) carry a very minute risk of transmission of HIV or STIs, (Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations, n.d.). The mandatory use of gloves and dams for sex workers is not only redundant in terms of decreasing risk, it also

76% of participants (152) said they were interested in outcalls being available as a mode of work at their brothel.

increases the chance of emotional and physical burnout for sex workers who constantly have to negotiate overzealous PPE requirements with clients. Based on comparisons of states and territories within Australia that have different legal requirements for PPE for sexual services, there is little evidence to suggest that mandatory barrier laws for any service are effective public health measures and Respect Inc continues to support the autonomy of sex workers in conducting safer sexual practices.

We found that workers in licensed brothels believe the existing laws are restricting their safety, work satisfaction and income opportunities. Over 50% indicated they would like to see change in the legislation regarding licensed brothels in at least one area, particularly regarding the number of rooms and sex workers on shift allowed at each licensed brothel, outcalls, restrictions on advertising and the prohibition of alcohol at brothels. Over half of the participants who had worked in other states indicated a preference for working in NSW due to the financial, emotional and safety benefits of working under decriminalisation. This suggests that contrary to the alleged purpose of

legislation regulating sex work, regulation is not perceived by sex workers to provide a safer, more beneficial work environment.

Legislation regarding sex work in Queensland is still largely driven by morality (Edwards, 2009) and the specific prohibition of alcohol and outcalls are reminiscent of anti-vice laws that are based on preconceptions and assumptions about 'public safety' rather than evidence. Currently 'sole operator' private sex workers in Queensland provide lawful outcalls and

provide clients with alcohol and we can find no evidence to suggest that sexual service providers in licensed brothels providing similar services would cause any special harm or negative effect. Similarly, brothels in NSW currently provide both outcalls and alcohol and do not appear to experience any special difficulties or incidences of crime and violence as a result compared to licensed brothels in Queensland.



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Sex workers in licensed brothels face significant barriers to adequate workplace health and safety standards in Queensland's licenced brothels. Due to (and in spite of) heavy regulation and strict licensing of the brothel sector, workers continue to receive inadequate training, experience coercion and bullying and are forced to negotiate excessive PPE laws to their detriment at work. Their workplaces are not adequately promoted; are restricted in their advertising; are restricted by the prohibition of alcohol and provision of outcalls and by the limitations on the number of rooms and workers allowed per premise. Sex workers are choosing to work in brothels in order to work with other colleagues for their safety and wellbeing; they feel forced to choose licensed brothels over private work in order to work within the law regardless of their demonstrated preference for autonomous work.

Participants have identified a lack of awareness around their rights as independent contractors and describe conditions and restrictions in the workplace similar to being that of an employee without having the benefits of an employment contract.

Peer education is the most effective method of providing sex workers with appropriate, in-depth sexual health information and support. Sex workers face significant barriers to accessing essential services including health care, financial

services, legal and justice services and housing. Sex workers are inadequately protected by enforcement of existing anti-discrimination laws and the inability of sex workers to access a basic standard of supportive, non-discriminatory health care (including sexual health) is of great concern.

The cultural relationship between sexual service providers in licensed brothels, the police and the PLA is unworkable and places sex workers at risk of exploitation and violence with no trusted avenue of recourse. Licensed brothel workers who participated in the BWNA described not only negative assumptions about QPS and the PLA but also individual examples of their perception that their needs were dismissed and their rights overlooked. Stigma and discrimination continue to feed harmful attitudes and approaches to sex workers which are supported by a regulatory system based on ideology that continues to centre sex work as a 'problem' and threat to public health - a concept not supported by any evidence.

It is the position of Respect Inc that full decriminalisation is the best legal framework to ensure the workplace rights, health and safety of Queensland's sex workers

Based on the results of the BWNA Respect Inc makes the following recommendations:

1. Recurrent funding is provided for a licensed brothel peer education program within an affirmative action framework, providing support in the areas of:

- Community development
- Health services workforce development
- Legal representation and advocacy
- Resource development

2. Sex workers in licensed brothels only be required to comply with 77A of *The Act*: mandated use of condoms for intercourse and oral sex with no further requirements for mandatory PPE.

3. Concerted effort is made by the PLA to inform sex workers in licensed brothels of their legal rights to refuse clients on the basis of a single unsatisfactory health check or any other reason and support their right to make a decision to refuse a client with no backlash or retribution from management.

4. Significant sensitivity and anti-discrimination training and education be implemented in the QPS to increase access to justice for workers in licensed brothels. We recommend the implementation of a Sex Worker Liaison Officer Program where the Sex Worker Liaison Officer has real past or present experience as a sex worker.

5. Concerted effort is made by the PLA to

establish relationships and procedures between licensed brothel management, the PLA, QPS and sex workers that reflects the duty of care owed by management and licensees in cases of violence and assault.

6. The capacity of the Queensland health system to respond to the health needs of workers in licensed brothels be assessed and addressed, including the current lack of facilities able to provide sexual health certificates in a timely and affordable fashion.

7. That a peer-driven education promotion be funded to inform workers in licensed brothels about their rights and responsibilities as independent contractors and the pros and cons of this status versus an employee model.

8. Concerted effort is made by the PLA to address the workplace coercion, bullying and breach of workplace rights, health and safety by licensed brothel managers in Queensland and the efficacy of the current licensing system be addressed.

9. That strategies to prevent coercion, bullying and breach of rights be developed with the consultation of sex workers in licensed brothels and included in the licensing requirements of licensees and managers.

10. Steps are taken to rehabilitate and strengthen the protections for sex workers in the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographics

Table A1. Age demographics of participants: Age, as identified/selected by participants

Age	18-25yrs	26-30yrs	30-40yrs	40-50yrs	50-60yrs	No answer
No. of Answers	44	52	52	25	3	24
% of Participants	22%	26%	26%	13%	2%	12%

Table A2. First language or culture of participants.

First Language or culture	No. of Answers	% of Participants
English	147	74%
European	13	7%
Korean	10	5%
Thai	10	5%
Filipino	6	3%
Chinese	4	2%
Indian	3	2%
Other	3	2%
African	1	1%
Asian - Unknown	1	1%
Malaysian	1	1%
Polynesian	1	1%
Japanese	0	0%
Vietnamese	0	0%
No Answer	1	1%

APPENDICES

Table A3. Current geographic work region of participants.

Geographic work region	No. of Answers	% of Participants
Brisbane - Metro South	63	32%
Brisbane - Metro North	56	28%
Gold Coast	41	21%
Sunshine Coast - Wide Bay	14	7%
Cairns and Hinterland	8	4%
Townsville	8	4%
Darling Downs - West Moreton	7	4%
Interstate (touring)	2	4%
No Answer	1	

Table A4. Length of time since commencing work at a Queensland licensed brothel.

Time	< 1 mth	1-6 mths	6-12 mths	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-4 yrs	≥ 5 yrs
No. of Answers	30	41	57	33	22	9	8
% of Participants	15%	21%	29%	17%	11%	5%	4%

APPENDICES

Appendix B: Occupational Motivation

Table B1. Motivation for commencing work in the sex industry. Participants were allowed to choose more than one answer.

Motivation	No. of Answers	% of Participants
To earn more money	90	45%
Curiosity	58	29%
Unemployment	51	26%
To pay for university/TAFE/college fees	48	24%
To support family/children	47	24%
To pay off debt	34	17%
To save for a car/house/holiday etc.	34	17%
I started off as a stripper	29	15%
Sexual fulfilment/enjoyment	23	12%
To support my partner	8	4%
Other	3	2%
No response	1	1%

'Other' responses:

1. To get better at sex
2. To live independently at university
3. Was abandoned by my ex abroad after him causing the loss of my job. Had no choice!

APPENDICES

Table B2. Motivation for choosing sex work at a licensed brothel (over other modes of sex work such as private/sole operator, street work etc.). Participants were allowed to choose more than one answer.

Motivation	No. of Answers	% of Participants
It pays better than other jobs I've had	90	45%
Because it's safer than other options	84	42%
Someone recommended it to me	84	42%
To be able to work legally with other service providers	74	37%
Because of the facilities	50	25%
I enjoy the environment	37	19%
Because I don't have to worry about running my own business as a sole operator	36	18%
Good working conditions	36	18%
I enjoy the work	27	14%
I've done it before	23	12%
Better clients	12	6%
Other	9	5%

'Other' responses:

1. Needed employment
2. Uncertain on what steps to take to work privately
3. I enjoyed sex
4. Anxiety, I can't seem to stay with another job
5. I don't have to do my own advertising
6. Fair pay
7. Can earn money in a short amount of time and study with the rest of my time
8. Didn't know where to start with private work
9. I previously worked privately in New Zealand, a few years ago

APPENDICES

Appendix C: Survey

QLD Licensed Brothel Workers Survey of Needs

We are Queensland sex workers united to provide a formal medium to communicate sex worker issues and concerns so as to improve the rights of our peers and respond to our workplace health and safety and other needs regardless of gender, age, location, industry sector, legal status, cultural background or linguistic abilities.

Please read about your participation in this survey and how valuable it is to our Industry.

YOUR PARTICIPATION

This study acknowledges that sex workers are the experts on their work. Sharing your expertise and experience of working as a sex worker/service provider will inform the outcomes of this research.

- The brothel workers survey of needs gives you the opportunity express your opinions on topics that matter to you.
- You will receive a \$30 COLES/MYER Gift Card as remuneration for your time and expert opinions.
- This survey has been written by sex workers who work for Respect Inc.
- There is no need to provide any identifying information in this survey.
- All questions on this survey are completely anonymous.
- Please answer the survey based on the QLD brothel you work in now.

If you identify as a licensed brothel service provider who works in a licensed QLD Brothel (or have done in the past 12 months), then you are invited to participate in this study, which examines the needs of licensed brothel sex workers in Queensland.

We recognise Sex Workers as the experts and knowledge of the sex industry. This survey seeks your opinions and perspectives on issues such as industry experience, attitudes and knowledge regarding sex work including working conditions, health, well-being and clients.

The survey involves completing a multiple-choice questionnaire with some open-ended questions. A Respect Inc Peer will be available for you to consult if you have any questions. It will take around 25-30 minutes to complete, and you can stop and return to the questionnaire as many times as you need to in order to complete it. It is a completely anonymous survey.

You may use an alternative name for the interview (or no name at all) if you wish. And you will be given an opportunity to read the survey again and make changes to it if you like. Your confidentiality is assured. The data cannot be accessed by anyone (including the PLA) other than staff of Respect Inc.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and may be withdrawn at any time. If you decide to withdraw your consent, then any data you have provided will be destroyed and not used in the study.

Information about the findings of the study will be available from Respect Inc at the email address provided below upon completion of the study in 2016, and the findings will also be published on our website at www.respectqld.org.au.

APPENDICES

BENEFITS

This study acknowledges that sex workers are the experts on sex work. Sharing your expertise and experience of working as a sex worker will inform the outcomes of this research.

Potential outcomes include a proposal to:

- Improve laws, regulation and/or brothel practices
- Work towards fairer working conditions
- Provide sex workers improved access to workplace rights

The results of this study will also be used to put together a report that will assess what kinds of support and information brothel workers in Queensland might need from Respect Inc.

This study has been funded by the PLA (Prostitution Licensing Authority).

Thank you for considering your contribution to this important research, which will be of benefit to QLD licensed brothel Service Providers and Sex Worker Organisations.

If you would like a copy of the final report generated from this study or if you have any unanswered questions please contact:

[Respect Inc Contact Information]



Demographics

1. Age

- 18 to 25
- 26 to 30
- 30 to 40
- 40 to 50
- 50 to 60
- 60 to 70
- 70 yrs plus

2. What is your main language/original culture?

- English
- Thai
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Filipino
- Asian - Unknown
- European
- Polynesian
- African
- Indian
- Malaysian
- Other (please specify) _____

APPENDICES

3. In which QLD region are you currently working?

- Cairns and Hinterland
- Cape York
- Central Queensland
- Central West
- Darling Downs - West Moreton
- Gold Coast
- Mackay
- Metro North - Brisbane
- Metro South - Brisbane
- Mt Isa
- Sunshine Coast - Wide Bay
- South West (West of Gold Coast)
- Torres Strait - Northern Peninsula
- Townsville
- Within state, touring
- Interstate, touring
- Overseas
- Interstate

[IMAGE: MAP OF QLD REGIONS]

Work Related

4. How long since you first started working in Licensed Queensland Brothels?

- Less than 1 month
- 1 to 6 months
- 6 to 12 months
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 to 3 years
- 3 to 4 years
- 5 or more years

5. How long have you been working in your most current Licensed Queensland Brothel?

- Less than 1 month
- 1 to 6 months
- 6 to 12 months
- 1 to 2 years
- 2 to 3 years
- 3 to 4 years
- 5 or more years

APPENDICES

6. How did you initially get into Sex Industry work?

- Unemployment
- To support family/children
- To support my partner
- To earn more money
- Curiosity
- Sexual fulfilment/enjoyment
- I started off as a stripper
- To save for a car/house/holiday/etc.
- To pay off debt
- To pay for university/TAFE/college fees

Other (please specify) _____

7. If you answered 'to pay off debt', will you work only for the time taken to pay off the debt? Yes/No

8. What made you choose sex work at a brothel?

- I enjoy the work
- I enjoy the environment
- I've done it before
- It pays better than other jobs I've had
- Someone recommended it to me
- Because it's safer than other options
- To be able to work legally with other service providers
- Because of the facilities
- Because I don't have to worry about running my own business as a sole operator
- Good working conditions
- Better clients

Other (please specify) _____

9. How many licensed Queensland brothels have you worked in, and in what regions? (please circle and write how many)

- Brisbane _____
- Gold Coast _____
- Toowoomba _____
- Cairns _____
- Townsville _____
- Sunshine Coast _____

10. Have you ever done sex work outside of a licensed brothel in Queensland?

Yes/No

- If yes, what kind of sex work? (please give details)

11. If yes, has this been a substitute to work in licensed brothels or in addition to?

Substitute/Addition

If you have worked as a sole operator sex worker, what are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a brothel compared to privately?

APPENDICES

12. What kind of training did you receive when you commenced working at a licensed brothel in Queensland? (please circle)

- How to do a sexual health check (use of gloves, light, etc)
- Identifying STI's visually (what to look for)
- Knowledge about how STI's are transmitted (blood, saliva, anal/vaginal sex, etc)
- Negotiating the booking (extras/boundaries)
- Dealing with difficult or violent clients & situations
- The right to not provide an introduction, see a particular client or provide a particular service
- The legalities around the use of condoms and dams
- Specific relevant information relating to policies at the brothel
- Fire safety
- Contact information for Respect Inc
- Contact information for the PLA
- Contact information for the LEU (Police: Licensing Enforcement Unit, previously PETF, Prostitution Enforcement Task Force)

Other (details) _____

13. Do you feel as though the induction training you received was sufficient?

- Yes/No

If no, explain why and what training you may benefit from.

14. Did you do anything to gain further knowledge?

Yes/No

If no, why not? _____

15. Who provided you with your initial induction and training?

- The brothel owner
- A brothel manager
- Another service provider
- A combination of the above

Other (please give details)

16. Have you ever worked in brothels in other Australian states?

Yes/No

17. If yes, where and what advantages did these brothels have over brothels in Queensland (e.g. laws, regulations, sexual health, security, personal safety, etc).

18. Does your brothel allow you to do private work (sole operator) on the side?

- Yes
- I'm not sure, I've never thought about doing private work
- No

APPENDICES

19. f no, what were you told and by whom? (e.g. manager, licensee, another service provider)

20. Does your brothel provide you with accommodation?

- Yes, they have a premise off-site
- Yes, we can stay on-premise overnight
- No

21. For on-premise accommodation, is the accommodation satisfactory?

- Yes/No

22. If no, why not?

23. Are you charged fines by management? For example, for being late, missing a shift or refusing to do an introduction?

Yes/No

24. Have you ever received a fine?

- Yes/No

If yes, please give details (e.g. what was it for, how much was it for, were you penalised for not paying it, etc?)

25. Is the level of cleanliness of the brothel appropriate for the workplace?

- The level of cleanliness is appropriate for the workplace
 - The level of cleanliness is not appropriate for the workplace (please give details of why and what could be done to bring it up to standard)
-

26. f the level of cleanliness is not appropriate, have you raised the issue with management?

Yes/No

If not, why not? _____

If yes, what was done about it? _____

27. Do you feel that a sufficient supply/quantity of prophylactics (condoms, dams and gloves) are provided in the service rooms?

- Yes, plenty of condoms, dams, gloves & lube are always available
- No

If no, have you ever run out of stock? Yes/No

If no, what did you do? _____

28. Have you ever had to provide your own prophylactics (condoms, dams and gloves) at the brothel?

Yes/No

If so, why and how long for? _____

29. Have you ever been charged a fee for the use of prophylactics (condoms, dams and gloves) at the brothel?

Yes/No

Does management insist on the use of condoms at the brothel

- Yes/No

If no, what do they say? _____

30. Does management insist on the use of dams at the brothel?

- Yes/No

If no, what do they say? _____

APPENDICES

31. Do you feel excessive safer sex strategies are used in Queensland Brothels (e.g. condoms, dams, gloves)?

- Yes/No

If yes, which ones?

32. What do you see as the *advantages* of working in a licensed brothel? (please circle)

- More clients
- Flexibility in working hours
- Companionship with other service providers
- Paid for doing something I enjoy
- Safety and Support
- The compliments from clients/boost of self esteem
- The convenience of everything being organised for me (all I have to do is turn up to my shift)

Other (please specify)

33. What do you see as the *disadvantages* of working in a licensed brothel? (please circle)

- The clients
- The downtime
- Expectations from management
- The social stigma
- Working with other service providers in a competitive environment
- The hours or limitation of available hours
- The rules and regulations
- Working on a roster
- Completing forms with my personal details
- Knowledge and skills of managers not meeting my needs

Other (please specify)

34. How would you rate your relationships with fellow service providers?

- Great, I get along with everyone
- Good, I get along with most people here
- Okay, work is work
- I don't get along with anyone here

Others (details) _____

35. How would you rate your relationships with brothel management?

- Great, I get along with everyone
- Good, I get along with most people here
- Okay, work is work
- I don't get along with any of the management

Others (details) _____

APPENDICES

36. Do you believe that management advertise and promote the brothel sufficiently?

- Yes/No

Other (please specify) _____

37. Do you use Social Media (facebook, twitter, etc) to advertise your services at the brothel?

- Yes/No

If yes, has this been successful and how?

38. Are photos of you posted on the brothel's website?

Yes/No

If yes, was your permission sought? Yes/No

If yes, have you had any issues with the use of your photos on the brothels website? (please provide details)

39. What are 3 things that would improve your workplace?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

40. What are the 3 most important things to you about working in a brothel?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Sexual Health

41. In terms of sexual health certificates, is the 3-monthly interval for testing:

- Just right
- Too long (what should it be?) _____
- Too short (what should it be?) _____
- Unsure

42. If you attend different places for your quarterly sexual health check, are the same procedures followed for the check?

Yes/No/Sometimes (optional details)

43. Where do you get your quarterly sexual health certificate?

- I have a regular GP
 - I visit different GP's
 - I visit the same clinic quarterly, but not always the same doctor
 - I visit whichever clinic can fit me in
 - Details of GP/clinic (optional)
-

44. How long do you typically have to wait for an appointment for a sexual health check?

45. What is the longest you have had to wait for a sexual health check?

APPENDICES

46. If you get a second health check on a client, do you feel comfortable getting them from another service provider?

- Yes
- Depends on the service provider (experience, maturity, integrity etc)
- Not really, no

47. If you get a second health check on a client, do you feel comfortable getting them from management?

- Yes
- Depends on the manager (sex worker experience, maturity, etc)
- Not really, no as service providers and managers have different agendas
- No

48. Have you ever felt pressured to do a service by the manager who has done a second health check on a client?

- Yes/No

If yes, please provide details

49. Has a client at a brothel asked you for sex without a condom?

- Never
- Rarely
- Some of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

50. If a client asks you for sexual services (oral, intercourse or hand relief) without protection (glove, dam, condom), what do you usually do?

- Not applicable
- Refuse to see the client
- Do the job regardless
- Talk the client into using a condom/dam/glove
- Provide an alternative service which doesn't include physical contact such as stripping while the client masturbates, etc

Other (please specify) _____

Safety

50. Do you feel as though you have sufficient communication skills to negotiate with clients? (for example: extra service, boundaries, etc).

Yes/No (please give details)

51. Does your workplace allow you to refuse clients?

- Yes

APPENDICES

- No
- Sometimes
If no, what has management said to you? _____
If sometimes, what has management said to you? _____
If you answered yes to the above, did you go ahead and see the client against your wishes? Yes/No

52. Have you ever felt pressure by management to see a client you are not comfortable with?

- Yes/No/Maybe/Other
- If you answered yes what has management communicated to you regarding the refusal of clients?

- If other, what has management communicated with you about the refusal of clients?

53. Are you penalized if you refuse to see clients?

- Yes/No

If yes, please give details _____

54. Have you ever been physically or sexually assaulted at work by a client?

- Yes, physically
- Yes, sexually
- No

Details (optional) _____

If you answered yes to the above, was it reported to management?

- Yes/No
- If yes, were you satisfied with the response?

If no, why not? _____

55. Would you like the option to do outcalls from your licensed brothel?

- Yes
- Probably, I had never really thought about it
- It would depend on the safety measures (drivers, security, etc)
- No

56. What could be done to make you feel safer doing outcalls?

57. Do you feel safe when entering/exiting your work premise?

- Yes/No

If no, please provide details of what could be done to make you feel safer

58. Are you satisfied with the security measures at the brothel?

- Yes/No

If no, please provide details

59. If you were assaulted at work, would you make a complaint to the police?

- Yes/No

If no, why not?

APPENDICES

60. What would improve your general safety at work (e.g. higher quality cameras, security, personal alarms, etc)

61. Have you reported safety concerns to management?

- Yes/No

- If yes, what did they do? _____

If no, why not?

62. Do you have any issues with the security cameras at your brothel?

- Yes/No

If yes, what are the issues?

Rights, Rules & Regulations

63. Are you aware of your legal rights as a sex worker in Queensland?

- Yes

- No

Unsure

64. When and how did you hear about the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA)?

65. What do you see as the main purpose of the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA)?

66. Have you ever contacted the Prostitution Licensing Authority (PLA)?

- Yes/No

If yes, what for and did you find them helpful?

67. Would you like to see any of the laws around Queensland licensed brothels changed?

- Yes/No

If yes, which ones and why?

68. Do brothel licensees and approved managers treat you as an independant contractor?

- Yes/No/Sometimes/I am not sure what an independant contractor is

If you answered no or sometimes, please provide details

69. Who do you think makes the rules about.....(please tick)

APPENDICES

	The PLA	State Law/Police	In House Brothel Rule	Tradition/Best Sex Worker Practice	Other (please specify)
<i>Condoms for oral sex</i>					
<i>Dams for oral sex</i>					
<i>Gloves for hand relief</i>					
<i>Gloves for fingering (vaginal & anal)</i>					
<i>Keeping a copy of your ID upon induction</i>					

70. Are you happy with the pricing of services in brothel?

- Yes/No

If you answered No, please tell us how much you think the pricing should be for a one hour standard service?

71. Are you happy with the brothel's price percentage ratio? 50% of total price to service provider for a standard service and 50% of total price to the brothel for room hire.

- Yes/No
- If you answered No, please tell us what you think the brothel's price percentage should be?

Personal Wellbeing

72. Do you feel as though there are barriers for you as a Sex Worker to access services?

Yes/No

If yes, which services?

- Medical (doctors)
- Childcare/Babysitting
- Housing (renting/buying property)
- Legal (police/lawyers)
- Financial (banks/accountants/bookkeepers)
- Centrelink
- The Australian Taxation Office (ATO)
- Public or Private Schools

Other (please specify)

73. Do you have people outside of work you can tell you are a sex worker?

Yes/No

If no, would you like to have someone outside of work to tell? _____

If yes, does this help you in keeping a healthy lifestyle and more balanced life?

The Future

74. Are you currently doing any other work?

APPENDICES

Yes/No

If yes, what kind of work? _____

75. Are you currently doing any study?

Yes/No

If yes, what kind of study? _____

If no, are you planning to do other work or extra study in the future? Yes/No

76. If Respect Inc were to receive funding, what do you feel would be the 3 most important things we could offer Queensland licensed brothel workers?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

77. Do you feel as though you would benefit from any of the following workshops? (please circle)

- Money Matters/Financial (Tax, Accounting and Bookkeeping)
- Career Development (In & Outside the sex industry - Goals, transferrable skills)
- Resume Writing & Interview Skills
- New Worker Workshop
- STI Workshop
- Emotional Wellbeing
- BDSM
- Sex worker arts and performance

Other (details)

78. Do you think Respect Inc should pay participants to participate in sex worker surveys?

Yes/No

If you answered Yes, How much do you think Respect Inc should pay participants for 30mins of their time to complete a survey related to QLD Brothels?

- Nothing
- 20
- 30
- 50
- 75

79. Your participation in this survey is appreciated, and we would like to Thank you for your time and expertise with a Coles/Myer Gift Card. Have you received the gift card from one of the Respect Inc. Team?

Yes/No



