Question on Notice
No. 442
Asked on 15 April 2008

MR JOHNSON asked the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Sport (MS SPENCE)—

QUESTION:

With reference to community concerns in a residential area of Upper Mt Gravatt, where a household is reasonably suspected of being a prostitution operation, including soliciting outside hours, would she explain what constitutes a 'nuisance' and what these residents (who have contacted their local Labor member unsuccessfully) can do to protect the wellbeing of their community and their children?

ANSWER:

Queensland has one of the best regulated systems for prostitution in the world.

The Queensland Government has legislated to regulate the prostitution industry through the *Prostitution Act 1999* and the *Criminal Code Act 1899*. The legislation allows for an independent operator to provide prostitution at a place. Therefore, no action can be taken against a single operator with respect to the provision of prostitution unless a prostitution related offence such as 'causing a nuisance' is identified.

A 'nuisance offence' is provided under section 76 of the *Prostitution Act*. This section applies to conduct in the vicinity of a place which is reasonably suspected of being used for the purposes of prostitution and that to a significant extent is caused by the presence of prostitution at the place. It provides a person must not cause unreasonable annoyance to another person or cause unreasonable disruption to the privacy of another person. The Act itself does not specify what types of behaviour constitutes a nuisance and it would not be possible to consider hypothetical situations. It will depend on the individual circumstances of the behaviour.

Police from the South Brisbane Police District received information on 11 January 2008 relating to the suspected provision of prostitution at an address in Upper Mount Gravatt. Subsequent investigations were conducted and there is no evidence to substantiate that organised or unlawful prostitution is being provided from the address. Additionally, investigations conducted to date have not identified any nuisance related offences.

The Queensland Police Service is committed to investigating any complaints relating to the provision of prostitution and ensuring prostitution-related activity does not create a nuisance. The Prostitution Enforcement Task Force has been created to overview the policing of prostitution across the State.

I urge anyone who has concerns about illegal prostitution to contact police or the authority immediately, but we have allowed sole operators to work legally in this state for the last 16 years and for the most part these individuals work discreetly, lawfully and responsibly.