

Australian Adult Entertainment Industry Inc.

A Professional Industry Association where the members are the owners of
Licensed Brothels and Escort Agencies in the State of Victoria.

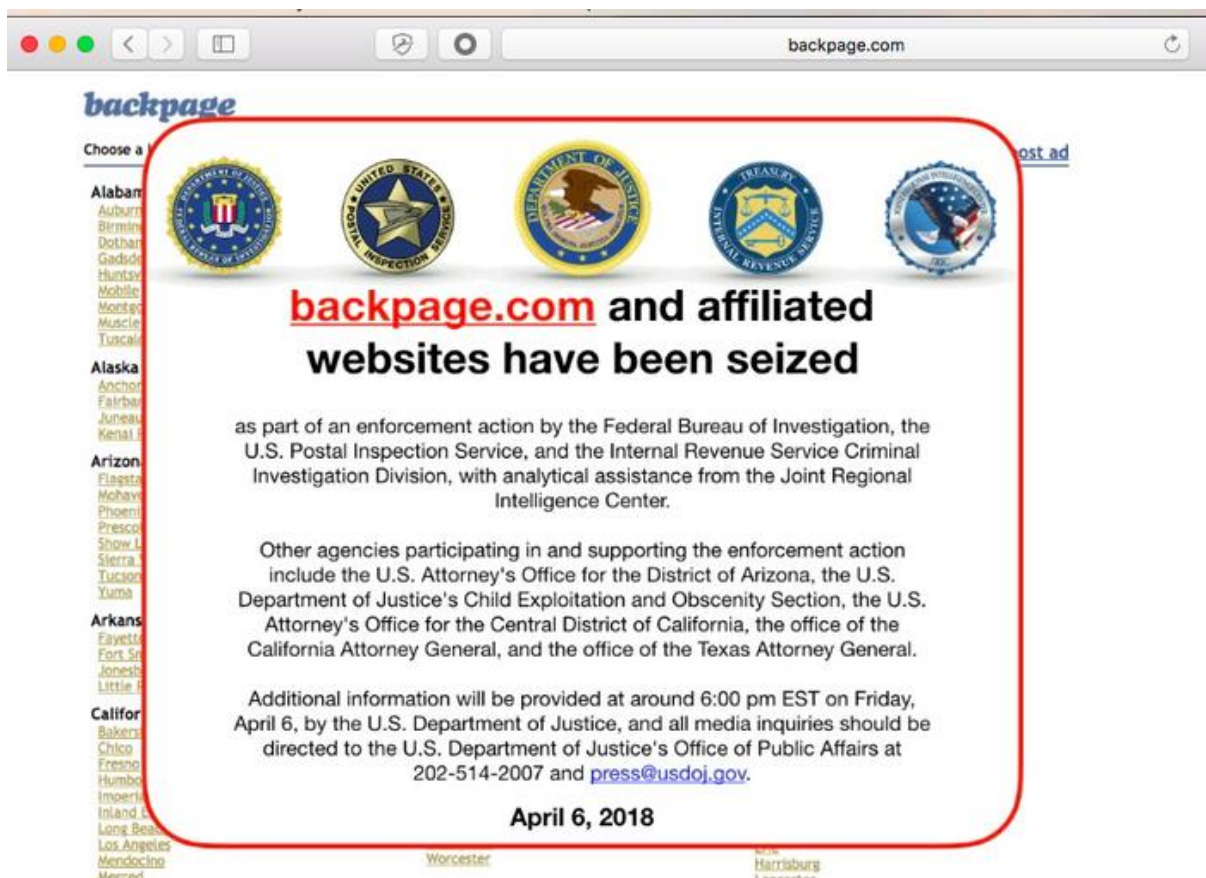
AAEI has affiliation in other parts of the Commonwealth of Australia

12 September 2021

Ms Julie Inman Grant
esafety Commissioner
submissions@esafety.gov.au

Dear Ms Inman Grant

Prostitution illegally portrayed on the Internet – Sex Industry submission



More than 3 years ago our friends in the United States of America led the world in their attempts to curtail prostitution advocacy on the Internet. The Americans regrettably failed.

Now the esafety Commission under your stewardship have the chance to do some world leading good public policy work. We wish you well in your endeavours.

PO Box 7076 St Kilda Rd Melbourne 8004
albonw@bigpond.com 0418 395 633

The 'we' just referred to is a Victorian based industry association whose members are the owners and operators of licensed brothels and escort agencies; Australian Adult Entertainment Industry Inc (AAEI). AAEI have affiliates in other states and territories in the Commonwealth.

AAEI do not approach this important development of good public policy from a point of self-interest, commercial aspect. It would be folly to pretend that the subject matter to which we protest would if curtailed, advantage our members operations. No we say our motivation is strictly in the arena of good public policy development.

For more than a decade AAEI have agitated to have the internet better regulated; we have been singularly unsuccessful. Some of representations are reproduced below.

To introduce the need for you to develop a good 'Restricted Access System' we cite the following example.

An internet Google search relying upon generic titles such as 'Escorts Melbourne', 'Melbourne Escorts', 'Just for Adults', 'Private Girls', 'Fuckbook' and 'Local Sluts' will provide detail of Sex Work Act section 23 exempt sexual service providers in substantial numbers in substantial breach of the Act and Regulations in that there is full body imagery, description of services provided, reference to ethnicity and the offer of sexual services at the private residence of the provider and more.

The context in which the above extract was originally presented to Victorian bureaucracy was to have the regulatory agency, in this case Consumer Affairs Victoria, try to have internet service providers comply with Victorian legislation and regulation as the rules applied to the provision of sexual services in Victoria. The following is further pointer to this end.

Locanto is a premium example of an Internet service that promotes illegal prostitution in Victoria, and Australia wide too. Locanto's pages carry promotions for 'Asian girls' providing sexual services in regional Victoria, two centres we are concentrating on are Shepparton and Traralgon. (Of course Locanto do even more ill work in metropolitan Melbourne but this is a regional illustration for now – fix the regions and the rest will fix itself). Locanto puts up images meant to be the visiting sex workers. Nudity and graphic and explicit description of service offered is to the fore.

Having referred to Locanto we will now highlight the issues that we believe ought to be of concern.

Locanto online as just one example of material inappropriate for children includes, quote;

Locanto is the advertising space where trans workers can successfully get work. However clients search for trans workers using language and terms

that reinforce fetishisation, often including slurs. In order to get work, trans workers are forced to participate in using language that reduces their humanity and puts their safety at risk

All of the above go to –

- High impact nudity
- High impact violence
- High impact language

– all matters of concern to you.

We have attached as a word document a list of the names and web addresses of 32 entities all advertising illegal prostitution* and all seriously trespassing in the grounds you seek to protect. * (illegal in as much as it all breaches the Sex Work Act 1994 and the Sex Work Regulations – both Victorian instruments both with a national application)

Your own tour of some the 32 sites or all of them (we caution) will expose you to some very extreme use of foul language. You will read some very graphic description of sexual services being offered and you will see imagery of a pornographic sort.

The mention of Victorian legislation prompts us to refer you to some correspondence between AAEI and the Victorian regulator, Consumer Affairs Victoria. You will see from the correspondence the degree that CAV may wish to become involved in this issue. AAEI would urge you to open some lines of dialogue with CAV Executive Director Ms Nicole Rich.

Through our fault entirely we have not followed this debate closely until just now. We have scrambled together this submission, making some current observations and drawing on some of our previous work.

So forgive the brevity of our submission; there is however enough there for you to understand that we have identified a medium, the 32 and there are more, who should in our view be made to feel the effect of your soon to be, Restricted Access System.

We wish you well in your deliberations.

The author of this submission is happy to speak with you and or your officers.

Yours in friendship

William Albon
AAEI Public Officer

Australian Adult Entertainment Industry Inc.

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Licensed Brothels and Escort Agencies in the State of Victoria.

AAEI has affiliation in other parts of the Commonwealth of Australia

13 March 2018

Simon Cohen
Director
Consumer Affairs Victoria
GPO Box 123
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Sir,

CAV and the need to deal with Internet breach of the Sex Work Act and Regulations

on 22 November 2011 AAEI submitted to CAV the matter referred to in our heading above, the need for CAV to arrest control of the abuse of the Act and Regulations.

That communication is set out as an appendix; it is as meaningful today as it was seven years ago.

Then Director Dr. Claire Noone wrote that she would have the matter examined. Nought has been heard. So we ask, will you please take up the matter.

We wish to go there once more for three reasons, the matter is outstanding, the magnitude of the problem is enormous and finally it will not go away, it continues to swell.

But first, a bit of context. We can provide you with the examples of what you need to look at but first let us advise you what occurs.

Locanto is a premium example of an Internet service that promotes illegal prostitution in Victoria, and Australia wide too. Locanto's pages carry promotions for 'Asian girls' providing sexual services in regional Victoria, two centres we are concentrating on are Shepparton and Traralgon. (Of course Locanto do even more ill work in metropolitan Melbourne but this is a regional illustration for now – fix the regions and the rest will fix itself). Locanto puts up images meant to be the visiting sex workers. Nudity and graphic and explicit description of service offered is to the fore.

Inquiries are answered by women saying they are at 'such and such' a hotel/motel, rates and services offered are settled on and a hotel/motel room number is provided.

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In both centres the councils say, tell the local police. The local police say tell the Sex Industry Coordination Unit, (you will know where this is going) and SICU tell the local police.

Because not a single agency is lifting a finger to combat this massive abuse of the legislation and regulation you administer, it seems appropriate to ask you to pick up where Dr Noone said CAV were headed.

In our view, you must find a way to have Locanto adhere to your legislation and regulation, but how you do that we don't know, we will leave to you.

We repeat our preparedness to put together an illustrative package of this mess.

Yours in friendship

(original signed on AAEI letter head)

William Albon
On behalf of the AAEI
Representing SWA license
Holders

Appendix

AAEI and CAV communication of seven years ago.

1. **www—the internet** – Just over a decade ago it became blatantly obvious to small & large business operators alike that there was a new force with which to reckon – the World Wide Web had arrived & was slowly changing the world as we knew it then. To survive it became necessary to firstly understand what this thing was & then, do whatever had to be done to take advantage of its apparent power. A level playing field existed because everyone who wanted to, took a crash course, created a website, changed the way they marketed their goods & services and enjoyed the challenge.

Our industry was no exception and the race was on to compete with each other, once again on a level playing field, under the control & guidance of the legislation which governed our industry.

It didn't take long for us to realise that although there were virtually no rules governing the WWW, those which governed us had suddenly seen us unable to compete. As much of a shock as that was, it was unfortunately just the beginning

AAEI wrote to Dr Noone on this topic recently and we reproduce that correspondence here.

***ESCORT SERVICES – INTERNET ABUSE OF SEX WORK CONTROL
ACT AND REGULATIONS a AAEI BACKGROUND PAPER JUNE 2011***

Modern technological advance in the area of the World Wide Web, the Internet, is massively adversely impinging on Sex Work Act escort agency license holders. The need for corrective action is imperative as it is urgent. There exists a circumstance where the emergence of other than a level playing field is causing your clients, our escort agency license holder members to genuinely question as to why they should not go 'over to the dark side' and abandon their SWC licenses. Let me be illustrative.

An internet Google search relying upon generic titles such as 'Escorts Melbourne', Melbourne Escorts, 'Just for Adults', 'Private Girls', 'Fuckbook' and 'Local Sluts' will provide detail of SWC Act section 23 exempt sexual service providers in substantial numbers in substantial breach of the Act and Regulations in that there is full body imagery, description of services provided, reference to ethnicity and the offer of sexual services at the private residence of the provider and more.

My own excursion into the world of the web saw a trawl using those generic titles named above produce what seems to more than a score of unlicensed 'escort agencies'. Serena James SWC 7686 XE, Nicole G PCA 6996 XE and Jamee Lee Fox PCA 6071 XE are just three of numerous women listed on these internet pages, all in breach of the Act and Regulations.

The modus operandi of just one of these businesses and most likely the m.o. of the others too, is to have a client who having used the Internet has identified his or her preferred provider, make contact via a phone or sms service or using e-mail with the agency.

In the instance known to AA EI the client communicates with the 'agency' office worker who is based in Cairns, Queensland. The office worker records the requirement of the client and forwards this detail to the sexual service provider who then initiates contact with the client. Payment by the client is either direct to the 'agency' or is made to the provider.

AA EI concede that we do not know how many of these unlicensed escort agencies exist. As I say my trawl identified at least a score. There are thought to be many more. AA EI do not know if these entities are multi owned and operated or whether they might be the property of just a select few.

AA EI do not claim to have a solution to this substantive problem. What AA EI do acknowledge is that the problem is of such magnitude, that existing lawful operators face financial ruin with the potential of them going as we call it, to the 'dark side'.

AA EI call upon Consumer Affairs Victoria to use their considerable resources and along with the Business License Authority investigate this outrageous set of circumstances and act to eliminate the unlawful practices and return the level playing field to the market place. We have copied this note to Mr Clyde.

AAEI stand ready to assist CAV and BLA in finding a resolution to a dilemma we are sure all will want corrected.

We note Dr Noone's response was to acknowledge the issue and to indicate that officers of CAV would look at the topic. We await further advice on this matter.

As indicated in our introduction the topic of the Internet is of significant importance to us. Of emphasis is the 'out of control' nature of the Internet and how practitioners (many XE status sexual service providers) are considerably abusing the Act and the Regulations. Of course this further gives emphasis to the absence of the level playing field.

As for the brothel component we have not seen the same level of abuse of the WWW, but we don't discount this is not occurring and that it will not change in profound terms.

There is sufficient level of abuse of the internet of escort agent practices and brothel practices, to warrant our call for action. (see appendix)

AAEI call on CAV to enter into immediate discussions with us on this topic, perhaps in a working party situation.

Australian Adult Entertainment Industry Inc.

8 June 2021

Nicole Rich
Executive Director,
Regulatory Services &
Director,
Consumer Affairs Victoria

By email: nicole.rich@justice.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Rich

Concerns about sex work and advertising

Thank you for your letter of 4 June 2021. Thank you for drawing our attention to the document Regulatory Approach and Compliance policy.

We note the document has been produced to meet your Minister's Statement of Expectations for Consumer Affairs Victoria now re-stated here; *'inform business and consumers about CAV's regulatory approach to risk, enforcement and regulatory action'*.

AAEI note your letter does not go to the degree to which you will inform business and consumers. Clearly we would have liked to see some flesh on the bones, but to have the skeleton described for us is, for the moment, ok.

We are pleased that you have written that the AAEI information on Locanto and the other filth peddlers that we have provided has been

incorporated into actions that may include referring matters to law enforcement agencies or writing to known internet providers, such as Locanto, about the relevant legal obligations.

To reiterate, just what AAEI would like to see is;

- The State and Commonwealth working together to rid the internet of the likes of Locanto before the end of the calendar year.

We are sure you will not mind if we ask you of your progress as time goes on.

Yours in friendship

(original signed on letterhead)

William Albon

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telephone 0418 395 633

Department of Justice and Community Safety

Consumer Affairs, Liquor, Gaming and Dispute Services

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Our ref: EBC 21034212

Mr William Albon
Australian Adult Entertainment Industry

Inc By email only: albonw@bigpond.com

Dear Mr Albon

CONCERNS ABOUT SEX WORK AND ADVERTISING

Thank you for your correspondence concerning various sex work advertisements published on online platforms such as Locanto.

Consumer Affairs Victoria's (CAV) public Regulatory Approach and Compliance Policy sets out CAV's intelligence-led, risk-based and outcome-focused approach, with a particular emphasis on addressing potential or realised consumer harm. That policy can be found here: <https://www.consumer.vic.gov.au/about-us/regulatory-approach-and-compliance-policy>.

We will continue to record and monitor intelligence we receive on this issue and consider our response by applying our policy. The information you have provided has been incorporated into that process to assist CAV in considering any actions under the *Sex Work Act 1994* or the associated Regulations. These actions may include referring matters to law enforcement agencies or writing to known internet providers, such as Locanto, about the relevant legal obligations.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns and informing us of these matters. Yours sincerely



Nicole Rich

Executive Director, Regulatory
Services & Director, Consumer Affairs
Victoria

04 / 06 / 2021

**Department of Justice
Consumer Affairs Victoria**
Sex Work Act 1994

In the State of Victoria in the Commonwealth of Australia advertising for sexual services on the pages of Internet servers, law and regulation needs to be adhered to.

Section 17 of the Sex Work Act 1994 governs the controls on advertising of sex services by providers.

Section 26 of the 1994 allows the Consumer Affairs compliance with and prosecute contravention of
By Order

Nicole Rich
Executive Director
Consumer Affairs Victoria

**Department of Justice
Consumer Affairs
Victoria**

Sex Work Act 1994

In the State of Victoria in the Commonwealth of Australia advertising for sexual services on the pages of Internet servers, law and regulation needs to be adhered to.

Section 17 of the Sex Work Act 1994 and Regulations governs the controls on advertising of sex services by sex service providers.

Section 26 of the Sex Work Act 1994 allows the Director of Consumer Affairs Victoria to monitor compliance with and investigate and prosecute alleged contravention of
Section 17.

By Order

Nicole Rich
Executive Director
Consumer Affairs Victoria

sex service

Sex Work Act
Director of
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Section 17.