

Monday, June 18, 2007

Rogue security providers will be made to pay

Increased penalties for unlicensed security providers come into effect on Sunday 1 July 2007.

Fair Trading Minister Margaret Keech said under the *Security Providers Amendment Act 2007* individuals and businesses operating without a security licence will be penalised up to \$75,000 and \$937,500 respectively and individual repeat offenders may face jail time.

"I am proud of these tough laws that put Queenslanders' safety first. Those caught working unlicensed will be hit hard, in fact five times as hard due to penalties for first offences being increased five fold," Mrs Keech said.

"The Office of Fair Trading will increase the number of inspectors out there checking licenses and making sure security providers abide by the law.

"Spot checks are conducted regularly to make sure security providers and licensed venues comply with the law right across the state.

"Since July 2005 at least 15 people were prosecuted for breaches of the *Security Providers Act 1993* and were fined in excess of \$68,000.

"In the past five years, more than 92 licences have been cancelled, 62 have been suspended and a further 484 licences have been refused.

"With these new laws, we will be able to take much stronger action against any 'bad apples'."

Mrs Keech said the amendments help the Government clean up the industry and enhance community safety and protect property.

"The next step will be to increase the probity checks making it harder for undesirables to get a licence or to renew it, which will come into effect before the end of the year," she said.

"The community should be confident that they can trust the person employed to keep them safe when they are out in public. Thugs aren't welcome in the industry.

"In 2008 we will be licensing previously unregulated sectors of the industry such as security equipment installers, electronic surveillance operators', dog handlers, in-house security guards, and security advisors.

"The laws will also require licensees' to undertake on-going training. This will make sure their skills are kept up-to-date with developments in behaviour and situation management so they can cope with any issues safely and effectively.

"Changes will also be made to the renewal process. If your licence renewal is not received before it expires then you will be unlicensed. This will affect approximately 17% of licensees who renew their licence late," Mrs Keech said

"Security is a tough and challenging industry to work in. People working in this industry should be applauded, not let down by allowing crooks and thugs who tarnish the industry's reputation.

"These tough new laws were developed in direct response to the clear need for stricter regulations and tougher penalties for those doing the wrong thing.

"Hopefully the security industry will get the message - play by the rules.

"The security industry will be informed well in advance before the next phases come into effect,"

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