

including lap dances, which simulate sex. There is no umbrella body regulating the live adult entertainment industry.

## **9.2 Dancers' working conditions**

### **9.2.1 Working Hours**

The women work from 7pm to 4am every day. Women have stage names and their real identity is not revealed to clients. Women receive Sundays and one other day a week off. Some of the women are students and most work on weekends.<sup>101</sup> Some women request specific periods and get assigned according to a roster for three months.

### **9.2.2 Accommodation**

Women have the option of staying in accommodation provided by Mavericks. The Commission visited the accommodation, which is situated in the same building as the club. The bathrooms are shared spaces with open showers, no curtains and no privacy. As with the working areas, security cameras are evident other than in the bedrooms and bathrooms.

Most of the women interviewed do not occupy the Mavericks accommodation, although a few had occupied the accommodation for several months upon arrival. Currently, mainly non-national women reside there. Upon inspection, the accommodation appeared clean and spacious with some women sharing rooms. The women did not report any problems associated with living in the accommodation.

When probed about whether or not they felt their privacy was invaded in any way whilst occupying the accommodation, they all responded that there were no security cameras in their rooms and hence they did not feel their privacy to be infringed.

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<sup>101</sup> Only foreign dancers who have study permits to enable them to study at institutes of higher learning may work on a part-time basis in terms of section 13(3)(a) of the Immigration Act. Regulation 10(4) limits the hours to 20 per week.

When asked about the rule that no visitors are allowed in the accommodation, they all felt that this was a reasonable rule for security purposes.

### **9.2.3 Leave entitlement**

The Commission was advised that after working for a period of six months, the women are generally entitled to two weeks' leave. Some of the foreign dancers work during the summer season, then travel to similar "revue" clubs in America, Europe or the Far East and return the following season.

### **9.2.4 Sick Leave**

The women are required to report any illness suffered to management. If it persists for more than two days, a medical certificate is required as verification. Mavericks has its own doctor who attends to the women, but the women indicated that they are permitted to visit any doctor of their choice if they wish. According to the rules imposed by Mavericks, even if a dancer has a letter from her doctor, she must report to the nurse employed by the club.

### **9.2.5 Fees and levies paid by dancers**

The women pay fees or levies in amount of R2 000 per week. Of the R2 000 levy, R650 is paid by Mavericks to the agency which recruited the dancer. Women who live in accommodation in the club building pay an additional R850 per week.

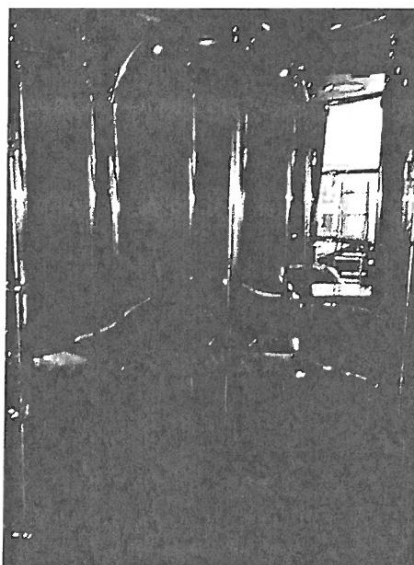
### **9.2.6 Perks and Benefits**

The women may eat in the club between 7.30 and 9pm in the evening, for which they are not charged. Other than food, the women do not receive any benefits. All necessary expenses, such as cell phones, waxes, costumes, hair styling or anything similar, are for their own account. The in-house choreographer teaches women who require extra dance classes, but if any other women wish to take extra classes they must pay for themselves.

The women perform dances on stage, at tables and in the booths. They are paid directly by the clients. When asked about lap dances and table dances, the women responded that for a 15-minute dance, they receive R1 000 and pay R200 to Mavericks for the use of the dancing booth. Each woman receives her money in cash and must pay Mavericks the amount of R200 per dance before the end of each week when paying their levy.

As indicated above, the dancers are required to strip down completely during their dances with clients. This means that women are required to remove all their clothing, including g-strings. The women indicated that they had to dance when menstruating and were not allowed to stay away from work during this time. The management of Mavericks denies this. During the interviews, the women concurred that they appreciated the high income they make. However, when asked what they disliked about Mavericks, they indicated that they did not like being told where to sit and what to do.

The women interviewed stated that they make "good money" and appreciate the fact that they earn well. It was not possible for the Commission to establish exactly how much money the women earn, but it is considerably more than a dancer would earn. It was reported that during the tourist season a dancer might earn over R 50 000 per month. Due to the fact that Mavericks considers the dancers to be "independent contractors", tax is not deducted from their earnings. The women are required to register as provisional taxpayers. It is unlikely that they in fact do so – whether they are foreign or local.



*Picture of a swing in one of the curtained booths at Mavericks*

#### **9.2.10 Commission on sale of champagne and consumption of alcohol**

The women earn commission of 20% on each bottle of French champagne bought by a client they are with. A number of women also said that they felt slightly pressured to drink alcohol. Some of the women felt that the alcohol assisted them in performing well in their jobs, but others did not generally like consuming large amounts of alcohol and felt obliged to do so in order to carry out their work duties. Some of the women reported that they were required to encourage clients to purchase more expensive bottles of champagne and wine at the bar, as this benefitted Mavericks.

Mavericks denied that the women were encouraged to drink too much and argued that this would be counterproductive. Management pointed out that the women were skilled in “pretending” to drink with the patrons while not consuming much. However, the Commission staff who visited the club unannounced one evening described more than one woman as being very tipsy.

### **9.3 The dancers**

#### **9.3.1 Recruitment of dancers**

According to the management of Mavericks, women are recruited as “professional dancers” and there are several marketing methods as such. These include:

- (1) Strippermagazine.com
- (2) Facebook advertising
- (3) International recruitment agencies which work in the industry (one based in Canada and others in the UK and Romania)
- (4) An application via Mavericks' website

Prospective dancers are required to send a headshot, body shot and evidence of previous dance experience. According to Mavericks, if their application is successful, Mavericks requests a copy of their bio page in their passport and the application for the necessary temporary residence permit is made by the dancer in her home country at her own costs. Mavericks provides assistance with necessary documentation.

Financial assistance is provided to some women based in South America (such as Brazil). In these circumstances, Mavericks appoints its own travel agent who does travel bookings. When a foreign dancer arrives in South Africa, she has to sign a promissory note and pay back costs within six to eight weeks.

Of the twenty women interviewed, eleven said that a friend had told them about Mavericks. Seven out of these eleven women were non-nationals. Out of the remaining three non-national women, two discovered Mavericks through the Internet and one indicated that she had obtained the information via a recruitment agent located in South Africa.