

Brothel closed down

Peter Simpson

Prostitutes were evicted from a brothel in Sham Shui Po yesterday when police and Government officers arrived to close the premises.

Officers with six-month closure orders sealed the doors of the apartment in Fuk Wing Street, following the conviction of a man charged with operating illegal vice services.

The prostitutes were allowed to pack their belongings before police ordered them from the premises.

The first-floor flat had been converted into three separate spaces in an attempt to dis-

guise the illegal operation by establishing "one-girl brothels".

But despite protests from one prostitute saying she was doing nothing illegal, a Supreme Court officer said the separate spaces were only one and instructed police to seal entrances.

Temporary cladding had been nailed over adjoining doorways and new entrances added.

The second closure took place in Tai Po Road. A second-floor apartment in Dung Lo Court had been split into wooden cubicles in which prostitutes sold their services.

The closures are the result

of a two-year undercover operation by Sham Shui Po district police.

The district operations officer, Chiu Wai-yin, said they were a significant step in the fight against vice in the area.

"Since we stepped up our investigations, we've had an overall decline in the number of vice establishments operating in Sham Shui Po, which is welcomed by the community, especially those who have to live close to such premises," Chiu said.

"But it's an ongoing problem and nothing guards against the owners of apartment buildings renting out the apartment to another manager of vice."