

Support after studio shuts

BY BLAIR THOMSON

THE owner of a closed tattoo shop says she is "at a loss" after being told she was unfit to hold an operator licence.

Kristen Brill said despite having no criminal convictions, she had been deemed unfit by police on Friday and given a week to close Wizards of Ink.

Ms Brill said she had ap-

plied for the licence four years ago.

The decision has led to the closure of the central Albury business, with five tattooists moving across the border to High on Ink in Wodonga.

Four other staff have lost their jobs, and the long-term future of the five artists remains unclear.

"They have given me seven days to shut the shop doors,"

she told *The Border Mail* on social media.

"I have five tattooist(s), a body piercer, cleaner and a manager, all who have their own bills to pay and I feel it's my responsibility to make sure they are OK.

"We have donated money to countless charities in Albury.

"I am at a loss and just shattered."

The decision is believed to relate to close association laws.

Operators are assessed based on a range of criteria, including police checks and security assessments of those closely linked to them.

Manager Chris McFarlane said many people were offering support to the business.

"It's a shock for a lot of people," he said.

"Every second person has been tattooed there or had a family member tattooed there."

Mr McFarlane said an appeal would likely be a "lengthy and costly process", but still hopes to re-open in another location.

A NSW Fair Trading spokesman said the agency and police had to consider if applicants were fit and

proper people to be granted licences, and if a licence was against the public interest.

"Fair Trading cannot grant a licence if an adverse security determination has been made by the Commissioner of Police," they said.

Police said "due to privacy reasons, we cannot make comment on security determinations for licence applications".

Load off drivers' waistline

FOR five Border truck drivers, the load they're carrying is significantly lighter these days - having lost a combined 273 kilograms.

About 18 months ago Craig McPherson tipped the scales at 180 kilograms but within six months he was a different man, having lost 100kg.

Nine months on, Mr McPherson remains less than half his previous weight.

"I feel better, I've got more energy, medically I'm healthier," he said.

Mr McPherson said being a truck driver previously meant plenty of fast food, but now he's happy opting for the healthier option.

Fellow Greenfreight colleagues Russell Niklaus lost 49.5kg in four months, Wayne Gilchrist 48.5kg in three months, Nich Martin 35kg in three months and Paul Cooper 40kg in 11 weeks.

Mr Cooper said after seeing the massive change in Mr McPherson, he was confident he could lose weight too.

"I've been big most of my



SLIM: Nich Martin, Russell Niklaus, hypnotherapist James Duncan, Paul Cooper, Craig McPherson and Wayne Gilchrist. **Picture:** JAMES WILTSHIRE

life, I'd tried other diets and I'd lost weight but I always put it back on," he said.

"The motivation to keep going is there every day on the scales, I was losing about 500g a day."

And the men attribute their results not to exercise - but to hypnotherapy.

They all attended Riverina Hypnotherapy's Shrink seminars, which owner James Duncan says focus on addressing stress.

Mr Duncan said by addressing the stresses behind weight gain and overeating, participants - including himself - can lose signifi-

cant weight and keep it off.

"If you want to get skinny you have to get healthy," he said.

Mr Gilchrist said the program puts participants on a 500-calorie diet and he had great support at work, with Craig and Paul already having shed the kilos.

"I'd tried shakes before and diets but it's often hard to cook when you're driving," he said.

"With this there's a bit of preparation but it's not hard. And you don't get hungry, it's just a matter of preparing.

"It was great to have the

support of the guys, we could talk about it and especially because I wasn't losing weight as fast."

Mr McPherson said when he started trying to lose weight he had no idea he'd lose 100kg, let alone inspire others to drop more than 170kg.

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