

Illegal Immigration

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Human smuggling and trafficking are matters of escalating concern for the Australian Government. It is extremely important that the government maintains some control over the influx of immigrants from overseas countries.

It is extremely lucrative for criminal organisations to smuggle and traffic foreigners between countries because of the low risks and the high income associated with the illegal immigrants. Many people from the world's poorer countries are attracted to Australia by higher income, better standard of living and employment prospects.

Legitimate programs for legal immigration may be expensive, time consuming and cumbersome. Many people turn to the assistance of organised crime for these reasons.

The areas of highest importance are those where research and investigation have revealed fraudulent and corrupt practices to allow migrant workers to enter the country and perform the so-called 3D hard labor and slavery occupations.

The grayer areas of smuggling and trafficking can be defined, within the process criminal organisations use corruption and fraud to perpetrate these illegal acts especially in the slavery situation. The evidence of those responsible can be produced.

The desire for many immigrants to migrate is stemming from economic/humanitarian needs, which is stronger than the impediment provided by the legal restrictions on immigration to many countries in the world. As a result there are people willing to seek immigration outside of legal channels involving fraud and corruption.

The uses of fraudulent documents are used in relation to entry of immigrants to Australia by air and sea borders. These immigrants can be exploited and working under duress making them victims under international law or where working in slavery conditions meeting commonwealth criminal code provisions known as trafficked persons.

The complexity of criminal involvement ranges from small amateur groups to transnational crime groups specialising in trafficking migrants. The variation in the operators also characterises smuggling and trafficking to Australia. There is a range of operators facilitating unauthorised entry of persons from the Philippines, Indonesia, and South East Asia.

It is understood that Iraqis, Afghans and Turks have been found in transit after leaving the source countries, which involved migration agents in source countries assisting with the preparation of fraudulent travel documentation and corrupt officials facilitating irregular movement of immigrants through international airports.

Evidence suggests that persons from a variety of source countries make their way to Indonesia, then to Australian air and land borders by use of their fraudulent travel documentation and corrupt officials sometimes of the same ethnicity assisting with movement through international airports.

Especially known is the Indonesian staging point for boat travel to Australia. Finding large numbers on boats in the Australian waters suggests that there are criminal organisers capable of moving large numbers of persons from the Middle East through to Indonesia.

Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs (1999b) cited in Tailby 2001, p.4 states ‘in addition there have been arrests of Iraqi residents and naturalised citizens in Australia for involvement in people smuggling. This suggests a local presence of Middle Eastern smuggling syndicates, defining smuggling as where immigrants

entered the country to take on better opportunities in finding work in factories and labouring roles.'

Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs 1999b cited in Tailby 2001, p.4 claimed, 'illegal arrival by air being facilitated by the supply of documents produced by document mills allowed access to corrupt officials en route. This service can be produced so long as immigrants have money and connections.

Taiwan based syndicates are known to be organising Taiwanese passports both stolen and fraudulent for Chinese nationals travelling to Australia. Agents also have been found assisting immigrants with fraudulent visa applications with recruiters arranging illegal employment in the distribution country.'

Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs 1999b, cited in Tailby 2001, p.4 claimed 'there are also rackets involving tour groups with a third party escort with exploitation of visitor visa system involving business visitors from China which was uncovered by DIMA in 1998.'

Women prostitutes come into Australia from South East Asia by air usually with an escort to meet with an agent who has prostitution rings. The escort accompanies them en-route to Australian brothel owners; the women come in on false papers in which the syndicate will have further contacts that can arrange documentation.

The Asian women usually have verbal contracts and claim they are destined for waitressing work but then are coerced into prostitution, if such allegation was substantiated as recruiting for sexual services, it would be relevant to class this as trafficking.

Some cases as smuggling by air have seen company's corrupt officials receive bribes (payments) and as a result, the company receiving hefty fines for allowing smuggling by air.



As Tailby (2001p.6) states one of the examples, 'Hotel owner Gary Glasner who was behind the illegal importation of at least 20 Thai women to work in brothels in Melbourne, he received a suspended sentence and 31,000 dollar fine suggesting ineffective punishment for organisers of international prostitution occurring.'

Human smuggling and trafficking is of a grave concern for international countries. There is a great need for cooperation between Middle Eastern, Asian, Philippine and Australian countries in addressing the issues of smuggling and trafficking of persons from all around the world to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development in the countries of origin and to address irregular migration.

Each country needs to develop and strongly enforce its own migration laws in line with other countries in regard to the supply and demand opportunities for legal migration and humanitarian issues.

Countries should strongly organise consultative committees in which liaises between each other in regards of legal and illegal migration.

The fraudulent documentation, travel visas, passports and travel papers are a very deceptive instrument being used to assist in false identities. This aids corrupt officials facilitating illegal immigration. This area should have stricter policing without addressing the real issues; unstable economic conditions will increase organised crime and assist these groups to higher levels of power.



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