



## **Australian Government**

Australian Government response to the  
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement report:

*An inquiry into human trafficking, slavery and  
slavery-like practices*

October 2020

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# Introduction

The Australian Government thanks the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (the Committee) for its inquiry into human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices and its final report tabled 18 July 2017.

The whole-of-government response to the Committee's recommendations has been coordinated by the Australian Border Force (ABF),<sup>1</sup> as Chair of the Government's Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery (IDC) which consists of:

- Attorney-General's Department (AGD)
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC)
- Australian Federal Police (AFP)
- Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC)
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP)
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE)<sup>2</sup>
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs)
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C)
- Department of Social Services (DSS), and
- Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO).

## **Australia's response to human trafficking<sup>3</sup> and slavery<sup>4</sup>**

Australia has had a comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy to combat human trafficking and slavery in place since 2004. The Australian response is founded on four central pillars:

1. Prevention and deterrence
2. Detection and investigation
3. Prosecution and compliance

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<sup>1</sup> In July 2019, the ABF assumed responsibility for the modern slavery and human trafficking policy functions previously delivered by the Department of Home Affairs following its establishment in December 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Following an Administrative Arrangement Order on 5 December 2019, the employment and skills functions of the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business were transferred to the renamed Department of Education, Skills and Employment. This followed Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2019 where the Department of Jobs and Small Business was renamed the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business.

<sup>3</sup> For ease of reference, this document uses the terms 'human trafficking' and 'trafficking in persons' interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> For ease of reference, this document uses 'human trafficking and slavery' as a general term that encompasses human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices including servitude, forced labour, deceptive recruiting for labour or services, debt bondage and forced marriage.

#### 4. Victim support and protection

Each pillar is informed by the overarching consideration of the rights and needs of trafficked people,<sup>5</sup> ensuring all stages of Australia's response to human trafficking and slavery are focused on the needs of victims.

Since 2003, the Australian Government has dedicated more than \$150 million to support a range of domestic, regional and international initiatives to prevent and address human trafficking and slavery. Key measures include:

- the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19*<sup>6</sup> (National Action Plan), which sets the strategic framework for Australia's whole-of-community response to human trafficking and slavery
- Australia's *International Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery*, which complements the National Action Plan and amplifies our efforts as a regional leader in preventing and addressing human trafficking and slavery
- a comprehensive legislative framework that criminalises human trafficking and slavery, and provides specific protections for vulnerable witnesses giving evidence in Commonwealth criminal proceedings
- the passing of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* by the Parliament on 29 November 2018 to establish a Modern Slavery Reporting Requirement. The Act requires relevant large businesses and entities to report on their efforts to combat modern slavery in their supply chains and operations
- specialist teams within the AFP to investigate human trafficking and slavery, and AFP-led training of domestic law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions
- support for the CDPP to prosecute human trafficking and slavery, including funding and training
- a victim support program which provides targeted, individualised case managed support to trafficked people (Support for Trafficked People Program)
- a visa framework that enables witnesses and suspected victims of human trafficking and slavery to remain in Australia to receive support and assist in the investigation and prosecution of offences (Human Trafficking Visa Framework)
- an overseas network of Home Affairs, ABF and AFP officers working in countries that are a key source of trafficked people, positioned to detect and deter human trafficking to Australia

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<sup>5</sup> For ease of reference, this document uses 'trafficked people' as a general term that encompasses all victims of human trafficking, slavery, and slavery-like practices.

<sup>6</sup> The Australian Government is currently developing a successor National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery.

- regional engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including through the *Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime* and its sub-groups including the *Government and Business Forum* and the *Working Group on Trafficking in Persons*
- multilateral engagement on human trafficking, including through the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Financial Sector Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (Liechtenstein Initiative)
- regional activities to deter human trafficking and slavery, train law and justice officials, promote stronger laws in the region, and assist victims under Australia's overseas aid program, including through the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking investment (which builds on the work of previous investments such as the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons) and the *Indo-Pacific Justice and Security Program*
- renewing collaboration with the International Labour Organization, investing \$20 million in a second phase of work to support safe and fair labour migration through the Tripartite Action to Enhance the Contribution of Labour Migration to Growth and Development in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (TRIANGLE in ASEAN) project, planned to run until 2025
- community partnerships with non-government organisations (NGOs), business and industry, academics and unions through the National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery and its supplementary Senior Officials' Meeting, and financial and practical support for the work of specialist NGOs
- training of frontline officials, including police, prosecutors, labour inspectors, and immigration compliance and visa processing officers, to recognise and respond appropriately to human trafficking and slavery
- awareness-raising measures to assist first responders, service providers, vulnerable groups and the general community to understand human trafficking and slavery, including indicators, referral pathways and support available, and
- research into national and regional human trafficking and slavery-related trends by the AIC.

Together, these initiatives address the full cycle of human trafficking and slavery, from recruitment to reintegration, and give equal weight to the critical areas of prevention, enforcement, and victim support.

More information about the Australian Government's efforts to combat human trafficking and slavery is available online (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/criminal-justice/people-smuggling-human-trafficking/modern-slavery>).

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# **Australian Government response to the recommendations of the inquiry report**

## **Recommendation 1**

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**The Committee recommends that member agencies of the Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery strengthen their coordination and engagement with each other, and that frontline Commonwealth agencies strengthen existing relationships with state and territory frontline agencies.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

### **Coordination and collaboration**

The Government has a range of well-established mechanisms to facilitate and strengthen national coordination and collaboration on a policy and operational level to combat human trafficking and slavery.

#### ***National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19***

The *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19* (National Action Plan) sets the strategic aims of Australia's whole-of-community response to human trafficking and slavery. The National Action Plan recognises that collaboration between governments, civil society, business and industry is key to effectively combatting human trafficking and slavery.

Activities undertaken through the current National Action Plan are informing the development of the next National Action Plan. The next National Action Plan is being developed in consultation with Commonwealth, state and territory governments, industry and civil society with a view to further enhancing coordination across Government agencies, including frontline agencies.

#### ***Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery***

The Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery (IDC) oversees implementation of the National Action Plan. Since 2019, the IDC has been chaired by the ABF with membership from the following Commonwealth agencies:

- Attorney-General's Department (AGD)
- Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC)
- Australian Federal Police (AFP)
- Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC)
- Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions (CDPP)
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
- Department of Home Affairs (Home Affairs)
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C)
- Department of Social Services (DSS), and



- Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO).

The IDC meets annually and communicates on an ad hoc basis as required, with two meetings in 2018 and one in 2019. Prior to the establishment of the Home Affairs Portfolio in December 2017, policy responsibility for the IDC sat with AGD.

IDC members also meet as part of the annual Ministerial-level National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery, the Government's key mechanism for consultation with civil society organisations on human trafficking and slavery issues, and the supporting Senior Officials' level meeting, also held annually.

### ***Operational Working Group on Human Trafficking and Slavery***

The Operational Working Group on Human Trafficking and Slavery (OWG) operates as a subcommittee of the IDC. The OWG is comprised of the ABF, Home Affairs, the AFP, the CDPP, and DSS. The OWG is responsible for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the National Action Plan, and resolving operational issues through managing individual cases. The OWG also has an important role in referring emerging policy and operational issues for the IDC's consideration. As appropriate, this is done in consultation with relevant Australian Government and state and territory colleagues. The OWG is chaired by the ABF and meets every six weeks, or more frequently as required by operational matters.

### **Engagement with the states and territories**

States and territories have a range of responsibilities that intersect with the Australian Government's strategy to combat human trafficking and slavery. The Government recognises that cooperation between Commonwealth and state and territory government agencies is necessary to ensure a joined-up and holistic nation-wide response.

The Australian Government regularly participates in a range of forums led by state government agencies and civil society organisations to consider policy approaches to combat human trafficking and slavery. This includes the NSW and Australian Government Working Group to address Forced Marriage, chaired by Legal Aid NSW, and the NSW Forced Marriage Network, convened by Anti-Slavery Australia and the Australian Red Cross.

To support coordination with the states and territories at an operational level, AFP offices are situated in all state and territory capitals and major airports and are able to flexibly deploy resources as investigative priorities require. The National Policing Protocol has also been developed to provide a national framework for Australian police forces to combat human trafficking and slavery in the future. This will allow for further development of information sharing protocols and operational processes

including the formation of an operational working group.

The ABF has a network of designated Human Trafficking Contact Officers (HTCOs) located in each state and territory. The purpose of the HTCO network is to assess and identify human trafficking during operational activities. The HTCO has a referral protocol to ensure the timely reporting of indicators of human trafficking to the AFP.

The ABF collaborates with law enforcement agencies, Commonwealth and state/territory governments and regulatory bodies to combat foreign worker exploitation by applying a full spectrum of measures, ranging from education and field compliance activities through to criminal prosecution and international engagement.

The Government established Taskforce Cadena (CADENA) in June 2015 to enhance national coordination efforts in operations targeting the exploitation of foreign workers and associated visa fraud. CADENA has served to strengthen intelligence sharing and working relationships between agencies, and provides a greater understanding of the threat environment relating to foreign worker exploitation and its linkages to human trafficking.

This approach enables agencies to conduct their business as usual enforcement activities but also leverage the capabilities of other agencies where required. In this respect, the ABF regularly collaborates with its partners to conduct joint operations relating to foreign worker exploitation, including the investigation of criminal offences pursuant to the *Migration Act 1958* and *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

## **Recommendation 2**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government funds the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015–19* so that it may be fully implemented, with a human rights-based approach to its implementation.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

The *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19* (National Action Plan) was implemented using existing resources and did not receive specific Government funding, with the exception of the Support for Trafficked People Program (Support Program). The Support Program is administered by the DSS and receives annual funding of \$755,000 under *Outcome 2 – Families and Communities, Component 2.1 National Initiatives*. Supplementary funding for the Support Program is provided by DSS using existing resources.

Australia's National Action Plan is founded on four equally important needs: to prevent and deter human trafficking and slavery, to detect and investigate offences, to prosecute offenders, and to provide support and protection to trafficked people.

In shaping Australia's national response to human trafficking and slavery, the Government is committed to observing Australia's legal obligations under the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, its supplementary *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, and the body of relevant international human rights and labour treaties which form part of the legal framework on human trafficking and slavery.

The Government responds to human trafficking and slavery in a way that ensures human rights are at the centre of all efforts to protect, assist and provide redress to trafficked people, including through observance of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' *Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking*, in so far as they accord with domestic law.

The Australian Government will further consider this recommendation in the context of the development of Australia's next five-year National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery.

### **Recommendation 3**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government increases the number of Australian Federal Police officers with specialised human trafficking and anti-slavery training in all states and territories.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

The Government remains committed to providing specialised training to the AFP in combatting human trafficking and slavery and providing support and assistance to victims of these offences. To facilitate this, the Government currently delivers a range of ongoing and ad hoc training programs to officials.

To ensure investigative skills are maintained in the investigation of human trafficking, the AFP conducts a regular specialised training course – the Human Trafficking Investigations Course (HTIC). All Australian police jurisdictions, Home Affairs, the ABF and the FWO are invited to attend the training. The AFP conducted five HTICs between 2017 and 2019, with a total of 139 officers trained. The AFP will maintain this training commitment as part of its responsibilities under the National Action Plan.

In 2014, the AFP, in collaboration with Victoria Police, developed and delivered the *Look a Little Deeper* information and awareness package on human trafficking and slavery to frontline officers. To date, the AFP e-learning package has been completed by 649 AFP employees. The package educates AFP employees about human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, indicators and best practice responses including victim management.

## Recommendation 4

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The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government:

- a) **expands training for frontline staff employed by the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection<sup>7</sup> and the Fair Work Ombudsman with respect to the Commonwealth offences at Divisions 270 and 271 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995***
- b) **works with its state and territory counterparts to ensure that state and territory police also receive adequate training with respect to the Commonwealth offences at Divisions 270 and 271 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, and**
- c) **ensures that this training includes reference to non-government organisations working on human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices so that they can refer victims for support and assistance offered through non-government organisations.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

The Government remains committed to providing specialised training to Government officials involved in combatting human trafficking and slavery and providing support and assistance to victims of these offences. To facilitate this, the Government currently delivers a range of ongoing and ad hoc training programs to officials.

To ensure investigative skills are maintained in the investigation of human trafficking, the AFP conducts a regular specialised training course – the Human Trafficking Investigations Course (HTIC). All Australian police jurisdictions, Home Affairs, the ABF and the FWO are invited to attend the training. The AFP conducted five HTICs between 2017 and 2019, with a total of 139 officers trained. The AFP will maintain this training commitment as part of its responsibilities under the National Action Plan.

In 2014, the AFP, in collaboration with Victoria Police, developed and delivered the *Look a Little Deeper* information and awareness package on human trafficking and slavery to frontline officers. In 2018-19, the AFP was allocated \$482,397 over four years to update and expand the *Look a Little Deeper* initiative to State and Territory police and Commonwealth agencies with a first response capability. The AFP is working to tailor the e-learning package to suit other agencies, including the Fair Work Ombudsman. In 2019, the AFP also delivered face to face *Look a Little Deeper* presentations to 357 people from key stakeholder agencies including Government and NGOs.

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<sup>7</sup> Following the Machinery of Government changes on 20 December 2017, the functions of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection were absorbed into the newly created Department of Home Affairs.

FWO's National Technical Training for Fair Work Inspectors is required to be completed upon commencement in the Inspector role. Since 2015, it has contained information and guidance on the referral of matters which are outside the FWO's jurisdiction, including suspected human trafficking and slavery. The training sets out indicators of human trafficking and slavery, and educates new Inspectors about appropriate referral processes. Face-to-face refresher training was delivered in January and February 2019 to support FWO Infoline staff to recognise indicators of human trafficking and slavery, and handle suspected instances appropriately.

Home Affairs and ABF officials continue to receive training in identifying indicators of human trafficking and slavery-like practices. As at 31 December 2019, 2,058 staff had successfully completed an online training module on human trafficking. Home Affairs also provides face-to-face specialist training to staff, including through the human trafficking modules of the Enforcement Operations Essentials and Border Force Recruit Training Programs. During the 2019 calendar year, approximately 400 Home Affairs and ABF officials were provided training on human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices.

Home Affairs and ABF officials preparing to be posted overseas are also provided with detailed briefings on the detection and prevention of human trafficking and slavery tailored to the overseas context. In 2017, Home Affairs produced a human trafficking training package which was distributed to overseas Posts to be used to train Home Affairs and ABF officials working at Post, their visa service providers, and external audiences such as host country authorities and regional partners. In 2019, 42 Home Affairs and ABF officials received training prior to commencing work at overseas Posts.

In addition, all Australian Government officials who are posted overseas are also required to report any information relating to the possible or attempted commission of serious extraterritorial offences under Australian law, including human trafficking and slavery. Prior to being posted, officials with consular responsibilities also receive training on the management and referral of consular cases involving extraterritorial offences, including human trafficking and slavery. This assists to ensure that such matters are referred to Australian law enforcement authorities.

The CDPP has obligations under the CDPP *Victims of Crime Policy* which applies to victims of human trafficking and slavery, as well as crimes against children and other vulnerable persons. Compliance with this policy is audited. This policy is supplemented by the CDPP *Victims of Crime Manual* which is a practical guide to help prosecutors meet their obligations under the policy and when making referrals to the CDPP Witness Assistance Service. The manual was updated in January 2020. All prosecution decisions are made in accordance with the *Prosecution Policy of the*

*Commonwealth* which outlines the factors and considerations which are taken into account when prosecutors are exercising their discretion.

Senior CDPP legal and Witness Assistance Service managers provide regular training to CDPP prosecutors and staff on their responsibilities regarding victims and their interaction with victims. The training provided prosecutors with practical tools and skills for engaging with victims of crime at various stages of the prosecution process. The training also provided an overview of the CDPP's policy obligations to victims of crime, including under the *Victims of Crime Policy* and the *Prosecution Policy of the Commonwealth*. For example, in 2019, training was conducted across the country for 124 CDPP staff, including 119 prosecutors on Plea Negotiations and Victims of Crime. Training centred on understanding the victim's perspective, effective communication with victims of crime and policy and other obligations.

Additionally, the CDPP has developed and distributed a guide to conducting conferences with victims and vulnerable witnesses. The CDPP has also established a Human Trafficking and Slavery Focus Group for prosecutors to share information and resources. The CDPP also regularly provides presenters to the AFP's HTIC, has participated in forced marriage training, and provides information on vulnerable witness protections to several of Australia's regional partners, including to Sri Lanka and in the Pacific Islands.

Ensuring that Government officials are appropriately trained to detect, investigate, and prosecute human trafficking and slavery offences, and provide appropriate support and assistance to victims of these crimes, will continue to be a priority under the new National Action Plan.

## **Recommendation 5**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government commits to continuous funding of overseas anti-trafficking programs, including AAPTIP and the work undertaken by the International Labour Organization with respect to migrant workers in the ASEAN member states.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

Southeast Asia is the principal focus of Australia's international engagement on human trafficking and modern slavery, as set out in Australia's *International Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery*.

DFAT has invested in combatting human trafficking in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region for over 15 years, with funding through the aid program steadily increasing over that time. DFAT has invested more than \$80 million through three consecutive investments under its regional aid program, the ASEAN and Mekong Program: Asia Regional Cooperation to Prevent People Trafficking, Asia Regional Trafficking in Persons Project, and most recently the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

These programs have delivered strong results such as building the capacity of more than 10,000 justice officials including judges, police and prosecutors. These officials have worked on complex and successful cases, including Thailand's prosecution in July 2017 of over 60 defendants for trafficking Rohingya victims. The programs have also supported transnational investigations into trafficking cases, including highly publicised cases in the fishing industry. Additionally, the programs have supported ASEAN in developing the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) which came into force in March 2017. Australia is supporting ASEAN countries to implement ACTIP through the \$3.2 million ASEAN-Australia ACTIP Implementation Project (AIP), which is delivered by The Asia Foundation.

In 2017, DFAT commenced designing a new counter-trafficking investment to build on the success of its long-standing work in the region. The new \$80 million investment, ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking (ASEAN-ACT), was subsequently launched by the Foreign Minister and other ASEAN Foreign Ministers in August 2019. ASEAN-ACT is a 10-year program designed to support the development of effective justice systems in the ASEAN region that provide just punishment of traffickers and protect the rights of victims. ASEAN-ACT aligns with Australia's *International Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery* and reflects Australia's ongoing commitment to countering trafficking in the region.



The ASEAN and Mekong program also addresses the causes of modern slavery more broadly, consistent with Australia's commitments to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7. Australia works with regional partners to reduce migrants' vulnerability to trafficking through the TRIANGLE in ASEAN partnership, delivered through the International Labour Organization and co-funded with Canada. TRIANGLE in ASEAN works both at the ASEAN level and at the country level to promote safe and fair labour migration in the region. This is achieved by helping ASEAN countries and institutions strengthen their labour migration policies and legislation, and providing information and services to migrant workers.

The ABF also works with Indo-Pacific partner countries to promote stronger laws on human trafficking and build the capacity of law and justice officials to implement them. This work is delivered under the *Indo-Pacific Justice and Security Program* (IP-JuSP), which is a four-year aid-funded program from 2017-18 to 2020-21 focused on building strong law and justice responses to transnational crime. The ABF works bilaterally with partner countries including Indonesia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, and regionally through co-chairing the Bali Process Trafficking in Persons Working Group (TIP Working Group) with Indonesia. Through the TIP Working Group, the ABF has developed a series of regionally endorsed best practice Bali Process Policy Guides on effectively criminalising trafficking in persons in line with international standards, identifying and protecting victims, and using financial investigation tools to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases.

The AFP actively participates in the Bali Process Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Networks. Collaborative activities and working relationships reinforce the shared goals of the Bali Process in relation to tackling the root causes of criminal activities relating to human trafficking and other transnational crimes.

The AFP has also invested in the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC) which is a joint capacity building initiative between the AFP and the Indonesian National Police. Through JCLEC, the AFP sponsors the delivery of people smuggling investigations training for law enforcement partners within the Indo-Pacific region. Additionally, JCLEC supports the delivery of countering human trafficking programs sponsored by the Bali Process Regional Support Office and other multi-national law enforcement agencies within the South East Asia region

Australia continues to encourage implementation of the *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto*, and supports the work of international organisations (including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) working to combat human trafficking, particularly in South East Asia and the Pacific.

## **Recommendation 6**

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**The Committee recommends the Commonwealth government de-links access to the Support for Trafficked People Program from compliance with criminal investigations.**

**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government facilitates and expedites family reunification for victims of trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

### **Victim support and protection**

Australia has a comprehensive whole-of-government framework to support and protect victims of human trafficking and slavery that is designed to ensure a balance between victim welfare and criminal justice processes.

Suspected victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences identified by the AFP are eligible to receive support through the Australian Government's Support for Trafficked People Program (Support Program). The Support Program is administered by DSS and delivered nationally by the Australian Red Cross. The Support Program provides clients with individually tailored support, including assistance with accessing suitable accommodation, financial support, medical treatment, counselling, and referral for legal and migration advice, as well as developing options for life after they leave the program.

The Government's dedicated Human Trafficking Visa Framework enables foreign nationals who do not already hold a valid visa and are suspected victims of human trafficking and slavery to remain lawfully in Australia on either a temporary or permanent basis to receive support and assist in the criminal justice process. As with Australian citizens and other valid visa holders who are suspected victims of human trafficking or slavery, they are then able to access support through the Support for Trafficked People Program.

Human trafficking and slavery-related prosecutions rely heavily on witness assistance and testimony. The Government's Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery remains of the view that complete de-linking of victim support and visa provisions from participation in the criminal justice process may affect the success of human trafficking and slavery-related prosecutions, which would substantially limit the potential deterrent effect of Australia's robust legislative framework.

The Government is committed to ensuring that the Support Program remains as

flexible and responsive as possible to emerging issues and complex victim needs. Between June and August 2017, DSS undertook an internal review of the Support Program to explore its suitability and capacity to assist new and emerging cohorts such as forced marriage clients, many of whom are under 18 years old.

On 15 February 2018, the Government announced it would commit a total of \$500,000 to support a trial to improve forced marriage victims' access to longer-term support under the Support Program. On 4 December 2019, the Government announced that the trial would be integrated into an ongoing stream of the Support Program. This ensures people in, or at risk of, forced marriage are automatically eligible to access up to 200 days of intensive support without being required to participate in a criminal investigation or prosecution against their perpetrators. The Government is considering the findings of the independent evaluation of the trial as it seeks to enhance efforts to support all victim cohorts under the Support Program.

### **Family reunification**

The Human Trafficking Visa Framework includes flexibility to assist with reuniting victims of human trafficking and slavery with their family members. A victim is entitled to include immediate family members in visa applications for both the temporary Bridging F visa (BVF) and the permanent Referred Stay visa (RSV).

Immediate family members in Australia can make a combined application for a BVF with the victim. If the victim is in their home country at the time of the BVF application process, and they have immediate family members in that country, they can also make a combined application. The permanent RSV also allows for immediate family members, whether in Australia or overseas, to be included in the visa application. The Government has implemented measures to expedite processing times for the RSV, which allows for quicker reunification of victims and any family members who have been outside Australia during the criminal justice process.

## **Recommendation 7**

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**The Committee recommends the establishment of a national compensation scheme for victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences to be funded by proceeds of crime.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

Under Australia's federated justice system, victims' compensation has traditionally been a matter for the states and territories. Each state and territory jurisdiction has a victims' compensation scheme, which may be available to people who have been subject to human trafficking and slavery-related offences. A number of trafficked people have accessed compensation from Australia's state and territory schemes, including with the assistance of specialist anti-slavery NGOs.

Australia provides a comprehensive range of support services for suspected trafficked people through the Government's Support for Trafficked People Program (Support Program). The Support Program is administered by DSS and delivered nationally by the Australian Red Cross. The Support Program provides clients with individually tailored support, including assistance with accessing suitable accommodation, financial support, medical treatment, counselling, and referral for legal and migration advice, as well as developing options for life after they leave the program.

## **Recommendation 8**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government considers ways in which to make the existing reparation orders available under section 21B of the *Crimes Act 1914* more accessible to victims of trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

Although section 21B of the *Crimes Act 1914* provides for reparation in respect of any loss suffered, it does not provide for a general compensation scheme.

The ABF will explore why reparation orders are not more frequently made, including through its consultations with government and civil society stakeholders.

## **Recommendation 9**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government considers appointing an Anti-Slavery and Trafficking Commissioner to:**

- a) monitor the implementation of the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015–19***
- b) provide recommendations, advice and guidance to government agencies on the exercise of their functions**
- c) oversee the effectiveness of Commonwealth legislation and policies intended to reduce the prevalence of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices and respond to corresponding offences, and**
- d) collect and request data and information on these practices.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

Australia already has an effective and well-coordinated national response to human trafficking and slavery that is subject to robust oversight from Parliament, Government Ministers and civil society. Australia's coordinated framework addresses the full cycle of human trafficking, from recruitment to reintegration, and gives equal weight to the critical areas of prevention, victim support, and criminal justice outcomes.

The Government's Interdepartmental Committee on Human Trafficking and Slavery (IDC) is responsible for carrying out many of the functions proposed for an Anti-Slavery Commissioner. The ABF, as Chair of the IDC, oversees the implementation of Australia's *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19* (National Action Plan), and relevant agencies remain responsible for administering individual components.

The IDC, and its Operational Working Group on Human Trafficking and Slavery, coordinates responses to emerging human trafficking and slavery issues, reviews the effectiveness of Australia's anti-trafficking/anti-slavery strategy and Commonwealth legislative and policy frameworks, and collates data on human trafficking and slavery trends. The IDC reports to the Australian Parliament, the ministerial-level National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery and its supporting senior officials' group. In addition, each agency comprising the IDC has individual reporting obligations.

The National Roundtable, which has met annually since 2008, also serves as a key mechanism for civil society to provide independent recommendations, advice and guidance to government agencies on the exercise of their functions, including the implementation of the National Action Plan and the effectiveness of Commonwealth

legislation and policies.

Additionally, the Government established a robust framework to implement the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* and monitor its effectiveness. The Government committed \$3.6 million through the 2018 Federal Budget to establish a new Modern Slavery Business Engagement Unit to oversee the implementation of the Act and provide expert support and advice to businesses. In May 2020, the Government also established a multi-stakeholder Modern Slavery Expert Advisory Group to provide independent advice and feedback about the effective implementation of the Act. The Government is committed to publicly monitoring the effectiveness of the Act, and must report annually to Parliament about its actions to implement the Act and compliance trends.

## **Recommendation 10**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government:**

- a) expands the pre-departure briefings and information currently available through the Seasonal Worker Program to a wider range of pre-departure countries and other categories of visa holders eligible to work in Australia, and**
- b) introduces post-arrival briefings to ensure migrant workers are provided with relevant information from the Fair Work Ombudsman.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

There are already a number of significant activities and programs underway which support enhanced communication with migrant workers. Visitors to the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) website ([www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)) can instantly translate website information into 36 different languages, and access other online content and resources translated into over 35 different languages. This functionality is aimed at assisting migrant workers to understand their workplace rights and obligations when working in Australia. This information is available to visa holders pre- and post-departure. The FWO reviews engagement with in-language content on an ongoing basis to ensure it meets the needs of migrant workers. The FWO also promotes its website and in-language content through its engagement strategies, and collaboration with ethnic media, community organisations and networks.

Multiple channels are offered to inform visa holders about worker rights in Australia. Home Affairs refers visa holders eligible to work in Australia to information available on the FWO website (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/visa-holders-and-migrants>), through forms, fact sheets, visa grant notifications and the Home Affairs website (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/trav/work/work/workplace-rights>).

Fair Work Inspectors and Officers deliver information and education to seasonal workers at on-arrival briefings. Approved Employers are obliged to invite FWO representatives to these meetings, as per the terms of their deed with the Commonwealth. FWO representatives use a variety of resources to engage with and educate participants during on-arrival briefings, including storyboards and animatics translated into 10 languages spoken by seasonal workers.

The FWO is currently working to improve the on-arrival briefing delivered to seasonal workers by Fair Work Inspectors and Officers, with the inclusion of a component that seeks to commence education while the seasonal worker is in their home country.



As part of the Government's commitment to protect vulnerable workers, in 2016 the then Minister for Employment announced the establishment of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce (Taskforce) to work across government to provide expert advice on ways to deliver better protections for migrant workers. The Taskforce Report and Australian Government Response were released on 7 March 2019. The Government accepted in-principle all 22 recommendations, which included a recommendation that a whole-of-government approach to the information and education needs of migrant workers be developed (Recommendation 2 of the Taskforce Report). In 2019, the Government implemented Recommendation 1 of the Report to establish a mechanism (the Migrant Workers' Interagency Group) to oversee whole-of-government implementation of the Taskforce's recommendations. The Government is actively progressing implementation of all remaining recommendations.

The Government is also considering the Final Report of the Labour Exploitation Working Group, established under the National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery to provide recommendations on measures to strengthen Australia's response to criminal forms of labour exploitation. The Working Group's focus included migrant workers in all industries.

## **Recommendation 11**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government strengthens visa protections where a visa holder has been subject to trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

The Government is committed to supporting victims of human trafficking and slavery as part of the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19*. Support to victims is primarily achieved through the Human Trafficking Visa Framework.

The Government's dedicated Human Trafficking Visa Framework enables foreign nationals who do not already hold a valid visa and are suspected victims of human trafficking or slavery to remain lawfully in Australia on either a temporary or permanent basis to receive support and assist in the criminal justice process. As with Australian citizens and other valid visa holders who are suspected victims of human trafficking or slavery, they are then able to access support through the Support for Trafficked People Program.

A suspected victim of human trafficking who does not hold a valid visa, or who is working in breach of a visa condition, is managed under the Human Trafficking Visa Framework. Non-citizens who claim they have been exploited are afforded every opportunity to explain their situation, and if indicators of human trafficking or slavery are identified, the person is referred to the AFP for further assessment.

Home Affairs and the AFP have an established Human Trafficking Referral Protocol (the Protocol) in place. The purpose of the Protocol is to provide clear agreed processes and timeframes for actions by both agencies when Home Affairs officials identify suspected human trafficking and refer this information to the AFP for potential investigation. The Protocol streamlines the referral process and ensures a better quality of referrals to the AFP. In particular, unverified information/allegations are now differentiated from formal referrals with clearly specified indicators of human trafficking.

## **Recommendation 12**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government establishes a licensing regime for labour hire companies.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation.

### **Migrant Workers' Taskforce**

As part of the Government's commitment to protect vulnerable workers, in 2016 the then Minister for Employment announced the establishment of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce (Taskforce) to work across government to provide expert advice on ways to deliver better protections for migrant workers. The Taskforce was chaired by Professor Allan Fels AO with Dr David Cousins AM as Deputy Chair, and was supported by the then Department of Jobs and Small Business. The Taskforce included representatives from a broad range of policy and regulatory Commonwealth agencies, ensuring collaboration and a whole-of-government approach.

The Taskforce Report and Australian Government Response were released on 7 March 2019. The Government accepted in-principle all 22 recommendations, including the recommendation to establish a National Labour Hire Registration Scheme (Recommendation 14 of the Taskforce Report).

The Government is progressing implementation and has been working on the design of the scheme in consultation with stakeholders, including state and territory governments.

### **Fair Work Ombudsman**

The FWO is participating in the Government's consultation process to inform and assist the development of a National Labour Hire Registration Scheme.

Through education, engagement and compliance activities, the FWO has significant experience tackling systemic issues of non-compliance and exploitation involving labour hire operators and supply chains. The agency also actively encourages businesses to take responsibility for preventing worker exploitation in their labour procurement practices.

The FWO draws on intelligence from a range of sources to understand the reasons for systemic non-compliance with workplace laws and to address worker exploitation. Through intelligence-gathering and analysis the agency identifies suspected non-compliant businesses for auditing, including labour hire entities. Where issues are identified, the FWO work with the businesses to fix any problems and systems are put in place to ensure ongoing compliance, which are tested with subsequent re-auditing by the FWO.

## **Australian Border Force**

The ABF collaborates with law enforcement agencies, Commonwealth and state/territory governments and regulatory bodies to combat foreign worker exploitation by applying a full spectrum of measures, ranging from education and field compliance activities through to criminal prosecution and international engagement.

The Government established Taskforce Cadena (CADENA) in June 2015 to enhance national coordination efforts in operations targeting the exploitation of foreign workers and associated visa fraud.

CADENA has identified that criminal groups often use the unregulated labour hire market to facilitate the movement and placement of foreign workers in exploitative conditions for financial gain. This activity is often linked to the use of lawful and unlawful immigration service providers who charge foreign workers significant fees to exploit visa pathways and prolong the stay of foreign workers in Australia.

The findings from CADENA have enabled the ABF to develop targeted operations against facilitators to disrupt the exploitation of foreign workers, including Operation Battenrun which has been targeting unscrupulous labour hire intermediaries since late 2018.

### **Recommendation 13**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government commission balanced and constructive research into the prevalence of sex trafficking into and within Australia.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

The Government has funded the AIC Human Trafficking and Slavery Research Program since 2007. The AIC is Australia's national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice, and produces independent research on crime and justice issues affecting Australia and the region.

As part of the Human Trafficking and Slavery Research Program, the AIC has produced a range of peer-reviewed publications relevant to the issue of sexual exploitation in Australia, which are available online ([www.aic.gov.au/publications](http://www.aic.gov.au/publications)).

Additionally, the AIC monitors trends in human trafficking and slavery incidents, offenders and victims. Due to the clandestine nature of this crime type, monitoring efforts have primarily drawn upon qualitative data to provide insight into human trafficking and slavery in Australia.

On 15 February 2019, the Government released a national estimate of modern slavery victims in Australia. The estimate was prepared by the AIC in partnership with the Walk Free Foundation and revealed there were between 1,300 and 1,900 victims from 2015-16 to 2016-17. The national estimate will assist the Government to create a more accurate picture of the extent of modern slavery in Australia to inform future prevention efforts.

The AIC is currently progressing a range of other strategic research projects through the Human Trafficking and Slavery Research Program to better understand the nature and context of modern slavery in Australia, including:

- mapping the attrition of human trafficking and slavery cases through the criminal justice system, to identify the points where cases are not progressing and why;
- understanding the process of criminal labour exploitation and identifying points of disruption, using crime script analysis; and
- reviewing the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19*, to inform the development of the succeeding plan and outline possible evaluation activity.

The Australian Government has also supported the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to deliver the 2019 report *Transnational Organized Crime in*

*Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact.* The UNODC report highlights the scale and scope of transnational organised crime threats in the region, including illicit trafficking flows, with a focus on particular crime types such as human trafficking and slavery.

## **Recommendation 14**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government strengthens visa systems to prevent involuntary human trafficking into the sex industry in Australia.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

The Government is committed to the ongoing strengthening of visa integrity processes to detect, disrupt and deter the exploitation of visa programs, and to prevent people being trafficked into and exploited within Australia, including in the sex industry.

The Home Affairs Portfolio adopts an intelligence-led, risk-based approach which anticipates, identifies and informs its efforts to combat human trafficking and slavery. Home Affairs and the ABF regularly review detection practices, visa processes and systems, based on intelligence and evidence, and together with the AFP, provide regular training to frontline officers, including officers in offshore posts that are considered source countries for human trafficking.

The Government routinely reviews policy and legislative frameworks in consultation with key government stakeholders and portfolio agencies to ensure arrangements remain effective.

## **Recommendation 15**

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**The Committee recommends that Australian governments support and fund initiatives to inform migrant sex workers about their legal rights and obligations both pre-departure and post-arrival in Australia.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation in principle.

All visa applicants on work visas are currently provided with general information on their work rights and obligations in Australia before departure, through visa grant letters.

The Government is also considering the Final Report of the Labour Exploitation Working Group, established under the National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery to provide recommendations on measures to strengthen Australia's response to criminal forms of labour exploitation. The Working Group's focus included migrant workers in all industries, including the sex industry, in recognition of the particular vulnerabilities faced by this cohort. The Working Group included experts from civil society organisations, including Scarlet Alliance (Australian Sex Workers Association) and Project Respect, to consider measures to effectively inform migrant workers of their legal rights and obligations, and options for assistance.



## **Recommendation 16**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government investigates the adequacy of current legislative provisions and criminal offences to address ‘cybersex trafficking’ and makes legislative amendments as necessary where current arrangements, including the provisions of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, are ineffectual.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

In 2019, the Australian Government progressed amendments to the Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* to strengthen its response to the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. The *Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Act 2019* (the Act) came into force on 21 September 2019. The Act includes a suite of child protection measures to target child abuse that occurs both overseas and in Australia, and addresses difficulties Australian Government agencies are facing in investigating and prosecuting child sexual abuse-related trends. Reforms in the Act include:

- the expansion of the definition of forced marriage to explicitly include all marriages involving children under the age of 16
- strengthened offences for persistent child sexual abuse overseas, by lowering the minimum number of occasions of abuse the prosecution must prove from three to two
- the removal of the defence to overseas child sex offences based on the existence of a valid and genuine marriage between the defendant and a child under 16
- the explicit criminalisation of certain dealings with child-like sex dolls, including possession
- a new offence for possessing child abuse material sourced using a carriage service, and
- terminology changes to remove references to the out-dated term ‘child pornography’ material.

The Government does not support the use of the term ‘cybersex trafficking’. The conduct being referred to is not trafficking in the context of ‘trafficking in persons’, as defined by the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The definition in the Protocol provides as follows: ‘Trafficking in persons’ shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a

The term ‘cybersex trafficking’ is generally used to refer to the viewing or paying to view the sexual abuse of children over the internet in real-time. This term is not clear and does not serve to communicate the seriousness of the conduct involved. Australia’s preferred term is ‘live-streamed child abuse’, which is consistent with United Nations preferred terminology.

The Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* has been used to successfully prosecute live-streamed child abuse.<sup>9</sup> Existing offences<sup>10</sup> in the *Criminal Code Act 1995* already criminalise sexual activity with a child – both physical and online offending, and offending that takes place in or outside of Australia. The definition of ‘engaging in sexual activity’ specifically and intentionally includes sexual activity that occurs through visual or auditory communications, such as online or over a mobile phone. These offences have been carefully drafted to ensure that the sexual abuse of children, both through physical contact and online, is able to be prosecuted – irrespective of whether the abuse occurs in Australia or overseas.

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position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

<sup>9</sup> For example, see *Rivo v R* [2012] VSCA 117; *DPP v Le Gassick* [2014] VCC 1288; and *Director of Public Prosecutions (Cth) v Beattie* [2017] NSWCCA 301.

<sup>10</sup> For example, section 272.8 (Sexual intercourse with child outside Australia), section 272.9 (Sexual activity other than sexual intercourse with child outside Australia), section 272.14 (Procuring child to engage in sexual activity outside Australia), section 272.15 (“Grooming” child to engage in sexual activity outside Australia), offences in Division 272 Subdivision C (Offences of benefitting from, encouraging or preparing for sexual offences against children outside Australia), and the offences in Division 474, Subdivision F: section 474.25A (Using a carriage service for sexual activity with person under 16 years of age), section 474.25C (Using a carriage service to prepare or plan to cause harm to, engage in sexual activity with, or procure for sexual activity, persons under 16), section 474.26 (Using a carriage service to procure persons under 16 years of age), and section 474.27 (Using a carriage service to “groom” persons under 16 years of age).

## **Recommendation 17**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government considers extending the application of protection orders relating to forced marriage to people over 18 years of age.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

Since forced marriage was criminalised in 2013, the Government has made significant efforts to prevent and address this harmful practice. Key measures have included:

- strengthening the legislative provisions by broadening the definition of forced marriage and increasing the associated penalties
- expanding specialist AFP investigative teams and Government-funded support for victims
- conducting awareness-raising activities, including by developing the Forced Marriage Community Pack and delivering nation-wide training workshops
- funding and providing practical support to specialist NGOs undertaking outreach, support and education initiatives
- launching *My Blue Sky*, Australia's first national information portal, referral mechanism and free legal advice service dedicated to forced marriage
- introducing a new stream in the Support for Trafficked People Program which allows people who are victims of forced marriage or at risk of forced marriage to access longer-term support without being required to participate in a criminal investigation or prosecution against their perpetrators beyond the initial engagement with the AFP
- funding a project with the Lighthouse Foundation in Victoria to establish a safe home for victims of forced marriage, and
- funding and providing practical support to Australia's first national Forced Marriage Conference in June 2018.

Refining Australia's response to forced marriage is identified as a key area of focus under the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19* (National Action Plan).

In mid-2017, the Government held nation-wide consultations with relevant state and territory government agencies and state-based Commonwealth agencies to consider options for strengthening Australia's response to forced marriage. These consultations included discussions on enhancing civil protection measures to inform the development of a model for enhanced civil remedies for people in, or at risk of, forced marriage. The ABF has also been monitoring the effectiveness of similar initiatives undertaken by Canada and the United Kingdom.

On 15 June 2018, the Government announced that it was developing a proposed model of enhanced civil remedies for people in, or at risk of, forced marriage, which would complement Australia's robust criminal legislative framework.

## **Recommendation 18**

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**The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth government continues to fund organisations and programs that engage in outreach, education and awareness-raising activities on forced marriage issues.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

Since 2008, the Government has committed more than \$6.2 million to support specialist NGOs working to prevent and address human trafficking and slavery, including specific grants to NGOs for activities focused on forced marriage.

In July 2014, the Government awarded almost \$500,000 in funding over 2014-17 to three NGOs to progress outreach, education and awareness-raising activities on forced marriage issues.

In July 2017, the Government awarded \$500,000 in funding over 2017-18 under the National Community Crime Prevention Program (NCCPP) to four NGOs to deliver community-based activities to prevent human trafficking and slavery-related crimes. Three of the funded projects specifically focused on forced marriage issues.

In July 2018, the Government awarded \$500,000 under the NCCPP to support the work of four anti-slavery NGOs over 2018-19, including for projects targeting forced marriage.

The Government remains committed to providing practical support for specialist NGOs working to prevent and address the harmful practice of forced marriage. In April 2020, the Government awarded almost \$400,000 under the NCCPP to support the work of four anti-slavery NGOs over 2019-20. One of these projects will focus on strengthening networks to improve national collaboration on human trafficking and slavery, including forced marriage.

## **Recommendation 19**

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**The Committee recommends that Australian Governments consider the inclusion of education on forced marriage in school curricula.**

The Australian Government notes this recommendation in the context of our commitment to ensuring the Australian Curriculum enables teachers to focus on fundamental learning priorities, beginning with students' literacy and numeracy skills, ahead of other competing priorities. While the Government plays a national leadership role in school education, state and territory government and non-government education authorities are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of education programs. This includes decisions about how best to implement programs, and viability of programs. In many cases, decisions are made by individual schools, ensuring education programs and resources are tailored to suit local needs and contexts.

The Australian Government remains committed to increasing education and awareness of forced marriage in Australia. Key initiatives to date include:

- funding and providing practical support to specialist NGOs undertaking outreach, and education initiatives, including awareness-raising initiatives in the education sector,
- developing the Forced Marriage Community Pack and delivering nation-wide training workshops on forced marriage, and
- launching *My Blue Sky*, Australia's first national information portal and free legal advice service dedicated to forced marriage.

## **Recommendation 20**

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**The Committee recommends that information on forced marriage is consistently and routinely provided to newly arrived migrants in Australia through their engagement with government officials and agencies, as well as appropriate community groups and programs.**

The Australian Government accepts this recommendation.

### **Family Safety Pack**

DSS has developed a *Family Safety Pack* for people coming to Australia. The pack includes information about Australia's laws regarding domestic and family violence, sexual assault and forced marriage, including messaging that women have the same rights as men. The pack includes eight factsheets about domestic and family violence, sexual assault, forced and early marriage, dowry abuse, female genital mutilation/cutting, LGBTIQ relationships, trafficking and slavery, and family violence and partner visas. The pack also includes one low-literacy domestic and family violence storyboard, and has been translated into 46 community languages.

The pack is a key initiative of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*. Under this National Plan, the Government is committed to understanding and addressing violence against women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and improving support available to culturally and linguistically diverse women and their children. The *Family Safety Pack* is available online ([www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack](http://www.dss.gov.au/family-safety-pack)).

### **Australian Cultural Orientation Program**

The Government provides information to humanitarian entrants offshore through the Australian Cultural Orientation (AUSCO) program. Home Affairs provides the International Organization for Migration with the AUSCO Student Folder, including an information pamphlet on Australian law for use in presenting settlement information to humanitarian entrants before immigrating to Australia. The pamphlet on Australian law provides information specific to marriage, including laws regarding forced marriage. Information about the AUSCO program is available online (<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/ausco/overview>).

### **Humanitarian Settlement Program**

Information provided to clients offshore through AUSCO is reinforced with humanitarian entrants following their arrival to Australia and participation in the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP).

Services delivered to HSP clients include an orientation program that applies a

nationally standardised curriculum framework of ten topics identified as core competencies for settlement success. Under the Australian Law and Family Functioning and Social Support topics, information provided to clients includes Australia's laws regarding forced marriage, domestic and family violence and how to locate relevant support services.

### **Life in Australia booklet**

The Government encourages visitors and new residents to learn as much as they can about Australia, including Australia's history, way of life and values. Provisional or permanent visa holders need to read or have explained to them the *Life in Australia* booklet before they sign the Australian Values Statement. The booklet is designed to assist visa applicants learn what it means to live in Australia. The booklet has been translated into community languages commonly spoken by Australian migrants and is available online (<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/Trav/Life/Aust/Life-in-Australia-book>).