

# **BALI PROCESS ON PEOPLE SMUGGLING, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND RELATED TRANSNATIONAL CRIME**

## **Workshop on Document Examination at the Border**

**Manila, Republic of the Philippines**

**1 – 3 April 2009**

### **Co-Chairs' Summary**

The Bali Process *Workshop on Document Examination at the Border* was held in Manila, Republic of the Philippines 1 – 3 April 2009. The workshop was co-hosted and co-chaired by the Philippines and Australia.

The workshop was attended by 53 delegates, representing 24 Bali Process member countries and international organisations.

The workshop was opened by Deputy Commissioner for the Philippine Bureau of Immigration, General Enrique B Galang Jr. In his opening speech, General Galang stressed the importance of the role of immigration agencies in fighting people smuggling, trafficking and other transnational crime. In an environment of increasing technological advancement, it is vital that immigration agencies, as gatekeepers to their country, exercise sound document examination capabilities. General Galang urged delegates to form networks and build partnerships to further develop and enhance a regional approach to information sharing.

#### **Objectives of the workshop**

The workshop delegates adopted the following objectives:

- An improved understanding of the different levels of document examination capability required within the immigration environment and the different levels of training required to develop and maintain that capability.
- An appreciation of document examination structure, management and training, to better place organisations in requesting and receiving appropriate international support in the future.
- An improved awareness of the different ways document examination alerts are used within organisations and strategies that can be employed to facilitate effective creation, use and distribution.

## **Co-Chairs**

The opening statements by the co-chairs Mr Sam Vallada, Chief, Anti-Fraud Division of the Philippines Bureau of Immigration and Ms Cath Wilson, A/g Assistant Secretary of the Identity Branch of the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship, provided a clear context for the workshop.

Delegates were encouraged to take the opportunity to exchange information and work together towards some achievable outcomes to practically assist the whole region in the prevention of people smuggling, human trafficking and related transnational crime.

## **Presentations and group discussions**

The workshop was presented in five parts as follows:

- Part 1 addressed the development and maintenance of document examination capability.
- Part 2 looked at the strategies employed in an e-learning environment.
- Part 3 was about document examination alerts and information.
- Part 4 focused on document examination equipment.
- Part 5 was a visit to the Philippines Passport Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Forensic Document Examination Laboratory at Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

On the first day, Australia made a presentation distinguishing the levels of document examination required within the immigration environment. The presentation also addressed relevant training and the anti-document fraud manager's role in the immigration environment. The Philippines followed with a presentation on the Philippines' experience in developing a document examination laboratory over a five year period. The presentations offered opportunities for discussion by all delegates and provided a good basis for detailed discussion within break out groups.

Delegates formed three groups to further discuss the development and maintenance of document examination capability in an organisation. They focussed on training and skills development as well as equipment requirements and management of the document examination function. The delegates acknowledged and discussed the different and complementary roles that frontline immigration and/or customs officers, secondary immigration officers and managers each play within the document examination framework.

The first part of the second day addressed the various ways that training and learning can take place, including a presentation by Singapore on the implementation and management of an e-learning document examination portal.

Delegates in three groups then workshopped ideas pertaining to document examination alerts and information sharing. During lively and interactive discussions, participants drew on their own experiences in identifying fraud and strategies for the examination of documents. Notably the discussions were centred on the development and maintenance of document examination capability and the document examination alerts and information systems.

Later in the week delegates visited the Passport Office of the Department of Foreign Affairs to view the issuing of the Philippines' machine readable passports, and the Philippines Bureau of Immigration to view the forensic document examination laboratory at Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Delegates also had the opportunity to view the latest document examination equipment which was provided and showcased by two industry specialists from the United Kingdom and Switzerland.

## **Key findings**

The key findings of the workshop delegates are that:

- Foundation training in document fraud detection is necessary for staff undertaking the immigration function at the primary line.
- More advanced training in document examination is necessary for staff undertaking the secondary (supervisory) inspection role.
- In each case follow-up/refresher training in document fraud detection and document fraud trends is necessary (for example half to one day every six months).
- Sophisticated and costly document examination equipment is not essential for most document fraud detection and document examination on the primary and secondary line
  - in these settings hand-held or simple desk mounted equipment are appropriate and should be provided.
- Document fraud alerts are very helpful for staff undertaking the document examination role and need to be swiftly accessible to all staff at the primary and secondary line.
- There is a strong willingness to share information including document examination alerts but there is currently no coordinated document alerts dissemination means.

## **Outcomes**

1. Delegates established informal networks which will be further developed as information is shared.
2. Delegates agreed to establish a small group to develop a model for the collection and dissemination of document alerts by participating Bali Process immigration and/or customs agencies. The group would report back to delegates (using the address list produced by the workshop) on its findings. Membership of the group is Fiji, Bhutan, Pakistan, the Philippines and Australia.

3. The group will also investigate whether the Bali Process website could be used as a document examination information site.
4. Australia will explore the possible development of a basic document examination e-learning package to be made available through the Bali Process website.

### **Acknowledgements**

Participating members agreed the objectives of the workshop were met and look forward to keeping newly-formed networks active.

Workshop participants expressed their appreciation for the hospitality of the Philippines and Australia in hosting the workshop, the presenters from Australia, the Philippines and Singapore for their excellent presentations and the assistance provided by the workshop secretariat.

Sam Vallada  
Philippines Co-Chair

Cath Wilson  
Australian Co-Chair

Manila, 1 – 3 April 2009

## **ADDENDUM**

The 'Document Examination at the Border' workshop was attended by Australia, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Kiribati, Laos PDR, Macau (SAR), Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, France (New Caledonia), Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu and Viet Nam as well as IOM and UNHCR.