

OUTCOME REPORT

OFFSHORE PEOPLE SMUGGLING TARGETING WORKSHOP COLOMBO, SRI LANKA 15 – 17 DECEMBER 2004

Background

A People Smuggling Targeting Exercise was held in Colombo from Wednesday 15 December to Friday 17 December 2004. This meeting follows on from the People Smuggling Targeting Workshop held in Bangkok on 24 and 25 May 2004. These meetings are a part of the Ad Hoc Expert Working Group 2 for the Bali Process which is specifically looking at developing operational approaches for people smuggling. Australian Federal Police Federal Agents Kurt Plummer and Brad Marden co-chaired the meeting.

The meeting succeeded in its primary aim of delivering a framework for the targeting of potential transnational people smuggling targets.

The following countries attended the meeting:

Australia Sri Lanka Thailand Indonesia
Bangladesh Pakistan New Zealand

There was also guest presenter from the Sri Lankan prosecutor's office who delivered a session on the current and proposed legislative arrangements in respect of people smugglers.

Outcomes

Major outcomes achieved were:

- Development of strategies to overcome regional intelligence gaps in relation to people smuggling to Australia and New Zealand through Sri Lanka.
- Following up on the outcomes of the People Smuggling Regional Targeting Workshop held in Bangkok in May 2004.
- Increasing the operational capacity of the participating agencies to combat the transnational crime of people smuggling.
- To put forward the AFP Transnational Targeting Network model for adoption as best practice for the participants in this exercise.

The meeting also added significantly to the capacity for inter Police liaison and communication in the sub-continent region. Each of the delegates expressed a willingness to share intelligence on People Smuggling as a part of an ongoing process. This ongoing process will significantly improve operational capabilities in relation to the disruption of large multinational People Smuggling Syndicates.

This meeting has further consolidated the ongoing effort in the fight against people smuggling within the Asia Pacific and Sub-continent Regions and was very well received by the delegates. It was also identified that a further meeting to include countries in the Middle East and others involved in the Budapest Process would be advantageous to securing a greater regional understand of the people smuggling problem.

It is anticipated that a project plan for a multi lateral exercise will be delivered to the proposed meeting pending endorsement of each agency's senior executive and a corporate commitment by that agency to the support of the proposed investigation.

In terms of the ongoing process of information sharing and targeting, how the information is communicated between participants remains an issue as previously reported from the outcomes of the Bangkok workshop. At the moment it is agreed to use the AFP Liaison Officer network.

The delivery of the program in country was assisted by the in-kind contribution of secretariat services by the Sri Lanka Police.

Intelligence Aspects

The main purpose of the workshop was the delivery of the intelligence framework to assist in the Intelligence targeting process. It is anticipated that this will form part of an on-going targeting exercise pending endorsement by the senior executives of the participating agencies.

Assistance

- The support of the AFP Liaison Officer network was critical to organising of the attendance of delegates. They will continue to play a vital role in the ongoing process.
- The provision of a full time secretariat by the Sri Lanka Police during the running of the workshop was also critical to the successful running of the meeting. It is essential that any future workshops of this nature have similar local support.

Conclusion

The main outcome of the workshop was an agreement to a process for the on-going targeting transnational people smugglers in our region and to review of the adoption of the Multi-Lateral Targeting Framework. It will also involve some further commitments by the AFP liaison officer network in passing information and organising the participants for a further meeting. It is anticipated that the main agenda items of the next meeting will be to develop better communication and to broaden the approach of this concept to the some of the course countries of the people smuggling networks.