BALI PROCESS WORKSHOP ON

DOCUMENT EXAMINATION EDUCATION IN IMMIGRATION

SINGAPORE, 29 OCTOBER – 1 NOVEMBER 2012

OUTCOME STATEMENT

1.   The Bali Process Workshop on Document Examination Education in Immigration was held in Singapore from 29 October – 1 November 2012. The meeting was co-chaired by Singapore and Australia. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Iraq, Kingdom of Cambodia, Kingdom of Thailand, Kiribati, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Palau, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Republic of Korea, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Vanuatu.

2.   The workshop provided delegates with an improved understanding of the different levels of document examination training strategies within the immigration environment and the different levels of training required for developing and maintaining that capability. It also provided an opportunity to discuss the value of e-learning courses within immigration departments.

3.   The Workshop explored the feasibility of developing a document examination e-learning training package accessible to members on the Bali Process secure website. The purpose of the e-learning package is to support members and assist with the training of border control officers in the evaluation and detection of irregular documents and other risks in the border control environment.

Proceedings

4.   The meeting was opened by Mr. Vijakumar Sethuraj, Acting Commissioner, Immigration and Checkpoints Authority, and Ms. Julie Anne Heckscher, Chargé d'Affaires, Australia High Commission to Singapore, with a welcome address at the opening ceremony. Mr. Tan Tee How, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, in a keynote address warmly welcomed members to Singapore. Mr. Vijakumar Sethuraj emphasised the need to stay ahead of the evolving global security landscape so that border security and identification professionals could effectively ensure the integrity of our borders, and facilitate the movement of cross-border travellers without compromising security. Given that one of the common modus operandi employed by syndicates would be to use fraudulent travel documents to gain entry into the

country, this workshop would allow the sharing of knowledge and best practices in document examination amongst participants. He shared that the working environment of our officers cut across different geographical locations and time; in this regard, ICA had put in place various learning platforms, including e-learning and game-based learning.

5. Ms Julie Anne Heckscher underlined that the Bali Process is an important forum that has developed practical measures to address the challenges of smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and measures to share the burdens, which are unequally imposed across the region. Ms Heckscher highlighted that training on document examination is a key contributing factor to successful border control. In this regard, technical training, closer coordination and harmonised information sharing will provide more effective responses to transnational criminal activities in the region.

6. Mr. Tan Tee How extended his appreciation to Australia for the continuous support and active involvement in efforts that promote regional cooperation and capacity building, especially in the area of security. He emphasized forging close collaborations among regional and international partners as a critical element in combating terrorism and other criminal acts. Hence, the Bali Process Workshops provide a valuable platform for member countries to build relationships, exchange best practice and experience, and enhance capacities and capabilities.

7. The workshop was co-chaired by Mr. Lee Chian Tak, Director of Intelligence, Immigration and Checkpoints Authority, Singapore, and Mr. Paul Cross, Assistant Secretary of Identity Branch, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Australia. The opening statements by the co-chairs provided the context for the workshop. Participants were encouraged to share their experience and best practice in document examination training.

Country Presentations – Theme 1: Training Strategies

8. Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and the Philippines presented an overview of their respective training strategies. The presentations emphasised the need to have separate training strategies for different levels of functional expertise. The presentations highlighted various training systems that include classroom-based, train-the-trainer approach and more in depth training for document specialists. These allowed the participants to explore how the various learning platforms, including e-learning could help to deepen officers' competencies and to note the differences in training requirements for different groups of officers.

First thematic Group Discussion – Document Examination Blended Training Strategies

9. Participants formed four groups to further discuss the development and maintenance of document examination capability in an organisation as well as the adoption of e-learning as part of training strategies. The groups were comprised of officers performing the immigration function at the primary line, immigration officers working with tertiary document examination equipment, trainers and managers/executives. During the discussion, some of the common training methods adopted by countries were as follows:

- Classroom learning;
- Buddy system/ Mentoring;
- On-the-job training;
- Refresher training;
- Information database on travel document specimens;
- E-learning;
- Dissemination of intel bulletins;
- Training by foreign counterparts and international organisations; and
- Regional and international conferences and workshops.

10. Participants agreed that there is scope for improvement and alternative strategies. In this aspect, e-learning initiatives were considered valuable as part of training strategies to complement face-to-face learning. Factors such as language, regular updating of training materials, technology, and internet connectivity would be key considerations.

Country Presentations – Theme 2: e-Learning Strategies

11. The presentations by Australia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, and the United Kingdom highlighted the potential to incorporate sophisticated and innovative graphical displays using high quality images. While presenters pointed out that live face-to-face training using real specimen documents would likely remain the ideal, the ability of e-learning packages to make use of magnification, audio, video, timed assessments and light source emulation in visual displays was considered to be valuable in circumstances where access to high level training facilities is not easy.

12. Lessons learnt from organisations with experience in developing e-learning packages showed the need for marketing, clear audience and scope, testing, support mechanisms, and the ownership of content.

13. Australia presented a prototype of the e-learning package to participants at the workshop. Discussions sought participants' feedback on the content and design of the e-learning package.

Second Thematic Group Discussion – Document Examination e-Learning

14. The four groups discussed the content development of the e-learning prototype. During the discussion, the participants agreed that the e-learning package should consider including the following:

- Security features of travel documents;
- Document examination and facial recognition techniques;
- Profiling and questioning techniques;
- Embedded graphics, videos and animation;
- Language aid;
- Travel document specimens database;
- User-friendly design;
- Phase-learning to suit competency level;
- Targeted training for border control officers;
- Common terms and references;
- Assessment component;
- Up-to-date content; and
- Multiple modes of accessing e-learning.

The participants also discussed the practical issues that might limit the use of e-learning, namely:

- Low computer/language literacy and phobia/lack of interest for e-learning;
- Limited computer access in office;
- Need for a secure network and potential abuse of system;
- Budget constraints;
- Ongoing maintenance and enhancement;
- Requirement for a clear set of guidelines for each country on the use of the e-learning package;
- Need for a communication strategy within each country to market the product;
- Out-dated information; and
- Lack of appropriate channels for information sharing.

Third Thematic Group Discussion – Country Contributions

15. The four groups discussed the respective countries' contribution to the content and development of a basic e-learning course. Generally, participants agreed that e-learning would be a positive development in training strategies and would be valuable for primary level border control officers. However, expertise is needed for project management, design and content development of the basic e-learning course. Further collaboration at a detailed level would be

essential to come up with a meaningful e-learning course for all.

Outcome

16. The participants supported the development of a Bali Process e-learning document examination package.

Follow-up Actions

17. Australia will invite interested member countries to participate in a technical working group meeting in Perth, Australia to progress development of a Bali Process e-learning document examination package.

Acknowledgements

18. The Co-chairs expressed appreciation to the organising committee for their assistance in the logistical and secretariat arrangements.

19. The Co-chairs and members expressed their appreciation to the Government of Singapore for its generosity and hospitality in hosting the Bali Process Workshop on Document Examination Education in Immigration.

Bali Process
Document Examination Education in Immigration
Singapore, 1 November 2012