

KEY UPDATES ON PROGRESS BY TASKFORCE

Since 2011, the Taskforce has put in place a series of measures to enhance its capabilities in handling TIP cases and embarked on various forms of public education to raise awareness of TIP. Some of the key updates are listed below for reference:

Building internal capabilities

(a) Enhanced training and SOPs

The Taskforce has been developing internal standard operating procedures (SOPs) for handling and investigating TIP cases, including referral of cases between agencies such as MOM, SPF and MSF. The SOPs will complement the existing checklist for our frontline enforcement officers in identifying and dealing with potential TIP cases and victims.

(b) Overseas study trips and engagement with foreign governments

The Taskforce attended the Asia Regional Forum on Combating Human Trafficking in Taiwan, from 29 May - 1 June 2012, to study their best practices as a Tier 1 country.

The Taskforce also conducted a trip to Thailand as a labour source country from 26-29 November 2012, to gather insights into Thailand's TIP landscape and their enforcement strategies, as well as establish points of contact for shared intelligence to tackle transnational TIP cases.

(c) Victim care

The Taskforce is working with relevant partners to improve on-shore amenities and humanitarian assistance for fishermen in need and looking into the possibility of setting up a Care Centre at Jurong Fisheries Port.

We are also studying the possibility of setting up a dedicated TIP shelter.

(d) Review of legislation

In 2013, we will continue to review all legislation related to TIP, to ensure that we achieve a desired legislative framework that will facilitate TIP prosecution and assist in the study of the feasibility of accession to UN Palermo Protocol on TIP.

Raising public awareness

(a) General public

The Taskforce has stepped up our engagement with NGOs, academics and embassies on TIP issues, particularly on public education initiatives and campaigns. For

instance, the Taskforce supported EmancipAsia's outdoor photography exhibition at various locations in Singapore in the second half of 2012.

This year, we also launched the TIP public awareness grant to encourage more public education initiatives for TIP. We are also in discussion with schools to run initiatives to increase youths' understanding of TIP and inspire them to act against such crimes.

(b) Foreign workers

The Taskforce has also reached out to foreign workers to raise their awareness on potential TIP exploitation and inform them of avenues for assistance. These include:

- Published TIP advertorials in "Working in Singapore" newsletters that are distributed at purpose-built foreign worker dormitories, MOM's Work Pass Service Centre and at MOM's Foreign Worker Roadshows.
- Put up posters with information of relevant authorities and/or civil society organisations whom distressed seafarers can call for assistance in the port vicinity.
- MOM officers also piloted pre-departure briefings in India and Bangladesh for workers coming to Singapore to educate them on employment conditions in Singapore such as salary payment, working hours and the channels they can seek assistance from, as well as employers' responsibilities towards them.