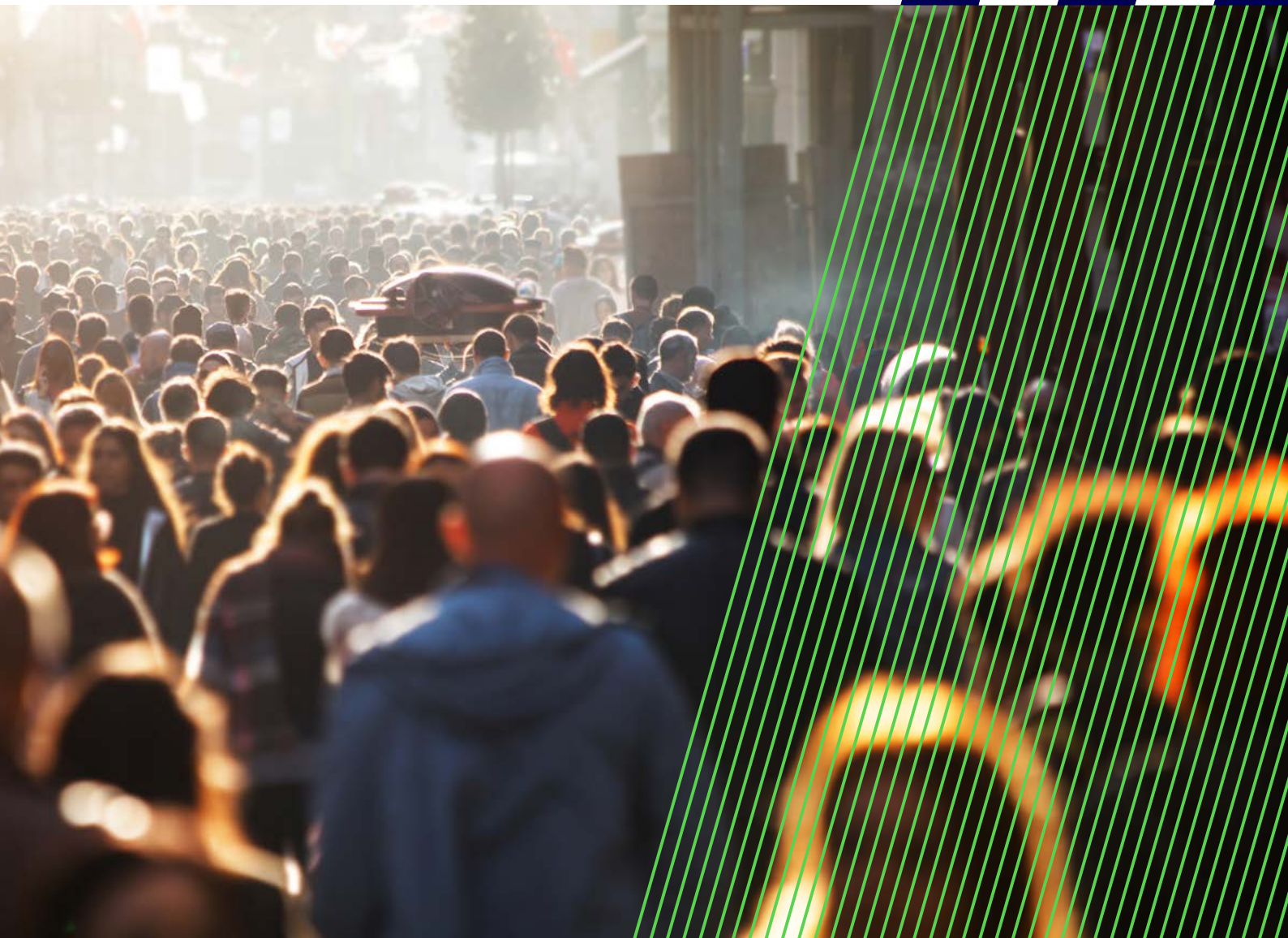




# AFP

## Human Trafficking and Slavery Strategic Plan

2023 – 2026





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# Introduction

A global crime requires a global response. Human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices are happening in Australia. These forms of human exploitation are largely unreported and can take many forms, exploiting the vulnerabilities of victims, often subjecting them to mental and physical abuse.

Human trafficking knows no borders, denying people their dignity and basic human rights. Victims of this crime are treated as a commodity to be exploited and sold, with large profits generated often for organised criminal networks.

Across the globe, unstable governments, displaced persons, low employment options, the increasing cost of living, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are exacerbating vulnerability to slavery and slavery-like practices which can occur in every country, industry and sector; and can occur in private domestic and family settings.

These types of offences are often under-reported, with research suggesting that for every one victim of human trafficking and slavery detected, four are undetected<sup>1</sup>.

The 2021 Global Organised Crime Index found that the exploitation of people, in the form of human trafficking, has become the most pervasive criminal economy in the world<sup>2</sup>.

The 2021 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery indicate that there are 50 million people in situations of modern slavery on any given day, either forced to work against their will or in a marriage that they were forced into<sup>3</sup>.

Australia is predominately a destination country for human trafficking and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) has identified trafficked persons from across the world. In the 2021-2022 financial year, the AFP received 294 reports of alleged human trafficking and slavery offences. This was the highest-ever recorded and an increase from 224 in the previous financial year. The AFP removed 52 victims from harm, referring them to the Australian Government Support for Trafficked People Program<sup>4</sup>.

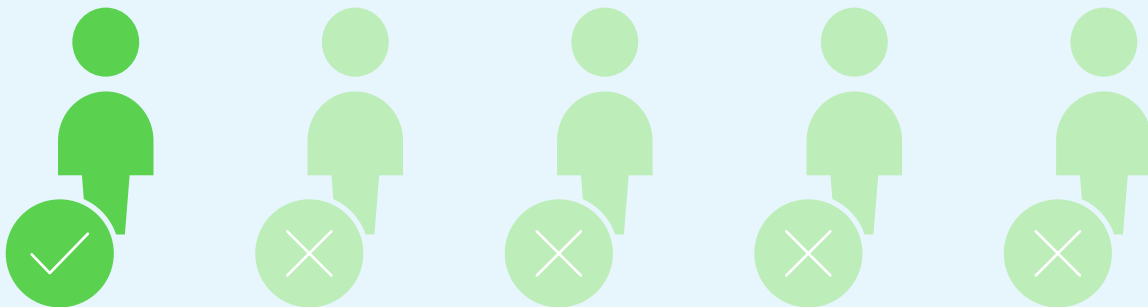
There are many investigative challenges in this crime type, particularly when victims are not aware they are victims according to Australian law. Victims may be young, vulnerable and scared, and language barriers may limit their ability to report, especially when perpetrators are members of their family or community.

## Human trafficking and slavery explained

Human trafficking offences involve the physical movement of people across or within borders by coercing, threatening or deceiving them for the purpose of exploiting them when they reach their destination.

Slavery and slavery like offences involve the ownership of a person or exploitation of a person in circumstances similar to slavery.

**For every one victim of human trafficking and slavery detected, four are undetected.**



# Our role

Australia's laws criminalising human trafficking and slavery are contained within Divisions 270 and 271 of the Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995 (the Criminal Code)*. In the investigation and prosecution of suspected cases, the AFP works collaboratively, both domestically and internationally, with government organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs), foreign agencies, and partners in our response to these crimes.

Key priority areas of focus for the AFP is the prevention, disruption, and investigation of human trafficking and slavery practices and the protection and support of victims<sup>5</sup>.



## Our vision

An Australia free from all forms of human trafficking and slavery offences.



## Our mission

To lead a coordinated and connected policing response to counter all forms of human trafficking and slavery offences.





# Our global foundations

Australia is part of a global response to combat trafficking in persons and modern slavery. *The Trafficking in Persons Report* (also known as the *TIP Report*) is issued annually by the US Department of State to monitor and combat trafficking in persons.

The report ranks governments based on their perceived efforts to acknowledge and combat human trafficking.

Australia is currently a Tier 1 ranking, which acknowledges the continued efforts of government organisations, including the Australian Federal Police. It is important for Australia to maintain this ranking as it demonstrates an ongoing, increased effort to counter human trafficking and slavery.

Other global efforts to combat this crime type include:

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**Also known as: The Declaration of Human Rights**

Human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices are violations of basic human rights and are prohibited under international human rights law.

*The Declaration of Human Rights* was proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (GA resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It sets out the fundamental human rights to be universally protected and has been translated into over 500 languages.

## Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children

**Also known as: The UN TIP Protocol**

*The UN TIP Protocol* is a protocol to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, and established in 2000 by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to suppress, prevent and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Australia is a signatory to this protocol, providing guidance around our global responsibilities, definitions and international priorities on human trafficking.

## The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime

**Also known as The Bali Process**

Since 2002, *The Bali Process* has raised regional awareness of the consequences of people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime. A forum for policy dialogue, information sharing and practical cooperation to help the region address these challenges, it has 49 members (co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia) including the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UNODC and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

# The Australian response

Australia has a whole of government approach to combating human trafficking and slavery offences driven through:

## National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-25

**Also known as: The National Action Plan**

*The National Action Plan* sets the strategic direction of our work to combat modern slavery in Australia over a five year period. The AFP has joint or sole responsibility for delivering 10 of the 46 action items contained within *the National Action Plan*.

## National Policing Protocol to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery

**Also known as: The Policing Protocol**

*The Policing Protocol* commits all Australian police services to a national framework to combat all forms of human trafficking and slavery and a key intent of this agreement is to ensure the needs of eligible victims of human trafficking receive support and are referred by the AFP to the Australian Government Support for Trafficked People Program.

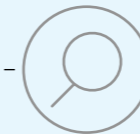
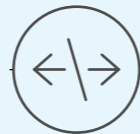
## International Engagement Strategy on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery: Delivering in Partnership

**Also known as: The International Engagement Strategy**

*The International Engagement Strategy* provides a comprehensive and coordinated framework to inform Australia's international efforts to help eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region. Australia will deepen its engagement in the Pacific over the life of the strategy.

# Our strategy

The AFP counters human trafficking and slavery with its partners through a victim-centric approach. To protect and support victims, the AFP focuses on the key pillars of Prevention, Detection and Disruption, Investigation and Prosecution of this global crime.



## PREVENT

### OBJECTIVE

In partnership with government and civil partners, the AFP seeks opportunities to prevent human trafficking and slavery offences by focusing on the root causes of exploitation, raising awareness and building the resilience of groups who may be vulnerable to these practices.

### STRATEGIES

- Increasing stakeholders' awareness and education of risk indicators
- Early detection and eliminating opportunities to offend
- Continuing development of specialist human trafficking investigators
- Working collaboratively with government, NGOs and industry, support education and awareness raising initiatives through the Look a Little Deeper Program
- Assisting, empowering and protecting victims of human trafficking and slavery through referral to the Support for Trafficked People Program
- Working with AFP Communications and Media to deliver proactive prevention campaigns and strategies
- Sharing knowledge and expertise and foster interdisciplinary research collaboration, including through the Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery Research Network administered by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC).

## DETECT & DISRUPT

### OBJECTIVE

Through enhanced intelligence and technology, the AFP will detect and disrupt human trafficking and slavery offences and increase education and engagement with domestic and international partners.

### STRATEGIES

- Increasing our understanding of the nature and extent of human trafficking and slavery
- Amplifying our capability to detect and protect victims
- Harnessing intelligence including the development of intelligence products to increase understanding of the size and changing nature of the human trafficking and slavery threat
- Increasing intelligence sharing to and by the AFP in support of partner law enforcement agencies, and relevant government departments
- Increasing communication and engagement with non-government agencies
- Actively contributing to domestic and international forums that focus on human trafficking and slavery to inform the AFP response and understand the regional environment
- Continuing to develop and deliver the Look a Little Deeper Program to first responders to help identify and detect instances of human trafficking and slavery
- Contributing to overseas capacity-building activities to support the identification of victims and survivors, and the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking and slavery crimes.

## INVESTIGATE

### OBJECTIVE

The AFP seeks to maximise damage on the criminal environment by ensuring our specialist human trafficking and slavery investigators are experienced and well-equipped with modern investigative tools and resources.

### STRATEGIES

- Investing in continued professional development and growing a community of practice to equip investigators to minimise reliance on victims through the criminal justice process
- Maintaining a high level of experience, with dedicated human trafficking investigations teams that are agile and unpredictable to organised crime networks
- Providing high quality multi-agency investigative response, whilst addressing the needs of the victim
- Continual development and delivery of Human Trafficking Investigations Training to AFP and partner agencies
- Leveraging AFP's international footprint to combat the transnational nature of human trafficking to take the fight against crime offshore through liaising with international partners
- Encourage and facilitate two-way communication of information, expertise and intelligence, domestically and internationally, between the AFP, partner law enforcement agencies, government agencies and NGOs
- Ensuring access to specialist investigative programs including Interviewing Vulnerable Persons.

## PROSECUTE

### OBJECTIVE

The AFP contributes to enhancing human trafficking and slavery offence prosecution outcomes and the victims trust in the process, by maintaining a high standard of investigation practices and briefs of evidence.

### STRATEGIES

- Ensuring tools, governance and guidance are available to assist front line officers
- Considering and pursuing, where appropriate, proceeds of crime and asset confiscation actions
- Giving effect to the non-punishment principle through the Commonwealth Director of Prosecutions (CDPP) prosecution policy and legislative defences. This ensures persons are not detained, charged or prosecuted for visa status related offences or those offences committed as a direct result of their exploitation
- Continuing to hold legal dialogues on human trafficking and slavery prosecution matters to improve prosecution outcomes
- Ongoing review of legislative frameworks to ensure they are effective to support disruption, investigation and prosecution actions.

# Our people

The AFP Human Trafficking Teams are responsible for the investigation of human trafficking allegations. These teams are located in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, with additional members trained in the investigation of human trafficking located in our remaining state and territory offices.

The National Human Trafficking Coordination Team (within the AFP Human Exploitation Command) coordinates the AFP's strategic and policy directive for human trafficking and provides representation on domestic and international human trafficking forums, supporting the AFP's international capacity in combatting these crimes. The team is also responsible for the AFP's education and awareness program, investigations training, standards and practices, stakeholder engagement and reporting.

AFP Human Exploitation Community Officers also contribute to the education and awareness through delivery of the Look a Little Deeper program and other community engagement initiatives with a specific focus on outreach with regional Australia, including working with diverse communities.

The Victim Liaison Coordination Officer supports the human trafficking teams through the development and monitoring of best practice in victim management, including fostering relationships with community stakeholders, as well as government and non-government partner agencies.





# Our partners

Working collaboratively with our partners, the AFP utilises its capabilities and networks to respond to the human trafficking and slavery crime threat. The AFP maintains international, national and local partnerships with both government and non-government sectors. These partnerships improve understanding and increase the effectiveness of an operational response.

While the AFP are the lead agency for human trafficking and slavery investigations under the *Criminal Code*, it is the state and territory police, and first responders who are more likely to come across this crime type, for example Fair Work Inspectors, the Australian Border Force (ABF), school teachers, nurses, doctors and the wider community.

The AFP continues to maintain strong relationships with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Home Affairs, Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and the ABF as partners to support overseas capacity building and support of victims.

The AFP's International Network provides investigative assistance to foreign law enforcement in relation to a range of crime types including human trafficking and slavery offences. The AFP works with its domestic and international partners to support law enforcement capacity uplift and the retrieval of victims from overseas.

The AFP plays an important role in educating the community including those sectors and communities vulnerable to exploitation in all its forms. This raises the resilience of vulnerable people from being exploited and builds greater community confidence in police as being trusted and effective in disrupting and investigating offenders and criminal networks.





# Case studies

## How is the AFP combating forced marriage and associated trafficking in Australia?

The AFP works closely with government, industry and NGO partners on a number of prevention and awareness raising campaigns related to forced marriage and associated forms of trafficking. Human trafficking requires law enforcement to take a harm minimisation approach. In some instances of forced marriage and exit trafficking the AFP is notified prior to the marriage or travel taking place, providing an opportunity for disruption and prevention. Alleged perpetrators often do not understand that forced marriage is a criminal offence in Australia.

In these instances, engagement with the family of the victim provides an opportunity to disrupt a forced marriage from occurring.

The AFP's Look a Little Deeper program aims to build capacity of law enforcement and partners ability to recognise and respond to human trafficking and slavery offences. Community liaison teams and initiatives like Project SKYWARP, which saw the distribution of human trafficking awareness flyers through Sydney airport washrooms, aim to raise awareness and education within the community on signs of trafficking and work to increase reporting of these crimes.



## Forced Labour

In July 2017, the AFP commenced an investigation after receiving a referral from Anti-Slavery Australia regarding a woman from the Philippines who traveled to Australia in May 2013 on a tourist visa. Police alleged the female victim was invited to Australia to aid a couple following the birth of a child.

When her visa expired, the couple told the victim she would not be allowed to return to the Philippines, leave the premises on her own, or talk to people outside of the family. The victim was directed to care for three children, prepare meals and clean the house, and forced to work in a local business owned by the couple, in addition to her household and nanny duties. During this time, the victim was allegedly subject to significant hours of work with minimal pay.

The couple exerted significant psychological control over the victim by engaging in repeated coercive and deceptive behaviour, forcing the woman to obey their instructions for fear that any refusal would lead to punishment. The couple constantly attempted to make the victim feel indebted to them by reminding her of the expenses they had paid to keep her in Australia.

As a result of investigations, in October 2020, the couple both entered guilty pleas for a range of offences, including the charge of forced labour. On 25 June 2021, the woman was sentenced to serve three years and three months in prison with a non-parole period of 14 months and ordered to pay \$45,000 in reparations to the victim. The man was sentenced to serve two years and six months in prison and pay \$25,000 in reparations to the victim.



## Look a Little Deeper

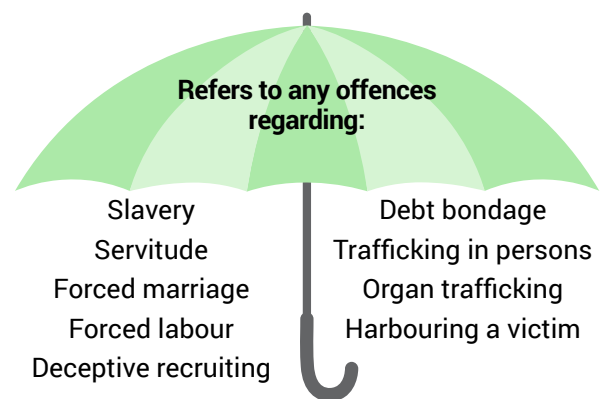
Reports of human trafficking and slavery matters to the AFP come from NGOs, schools, medical providers and members of the victims' community. Reports also come from witnesses of alleged offences, Commonwealth agencies, including DFAT, ABF and state and territory police forces.

The AFP's Look a Little Deeper program recognises that first responders are likely to encounter indicators of human trafficking and slavery in the course of their day-to-day duties and aims to equip them to respond effectively, enhance victim safety, and ensure that the victim is provided with the appropriate victim and/or law enforcement support. Over the course of this plan, the Look a Little Deeper program will continue to expand and be delivered to external organisations that may encounter victims of human trafficking and slavery.

# Terminology and definitions

The *National Action Plan* uses the umbrella term 'modern slavery' to describe all human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like offences in Divisions 270 and 271 of the *Criminal Code* and definitions around the broad range of offences can be found within the *Criminal Code*<sup>6</sup>.

## Human trafficking & slavery offences



<b>Human trafficking</b>	The act of trafficking in persons through the recruitment, transportation, transfer and harbouring, or receipt of persons by means of threat or the use of force or other forms of coercion (including abduction, deception, abuse of power, fraud, vulnerability, giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, or having control over another person) for the purpose of exploitation.
<b>Trafficking in persons</b>	The physical movement of people across or within borders through coercion, threat or deception for the purpose of exploiting them when they reach their destination. Where the person being trafficked is a child, coercion, threat or deception is not required for a trafficking in persons offence to be established under Australian law. That means that any child who has been physically moved for the purpose of exploitation has been trafficked.
<b>Slavery</b>	Situations where any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person are exercised. This includes when the ownership arises because of a debt or contract made by the victim.
<b>Slavery-like-practices</b>	Exploitation so serious that it is considered similar to slavery. These offences include servitude, forced labour, deceptive recruiting for labour or services, debt bondage, and forced marriage.
<b>Victim and/or survivor</b>	These terms are often used to describe an individual who has experienced modern slavery.  We acknowledge that individuals who have experienced modern slavery may not identify with the terms 'victim' or 'survivor'.



## Human trafficking vs. People smuggling

People smuggling is a very different crime to human trafficking and other forms of modern slavery. People smuggling refers to the organised, irregular movement of people across international borders on a payment-for-service basis. This is distinct from human trafficking, which refers to the movement of people across or within borders through coercion, threat or deception for the purpose of exploiting them.

While there are key differences between people smuggling and human trafficking, people who are smuggled can become vulnerable to modern slavery crimes.



# Resources

## Identify

The AFP website has a [list of signs to identify potential human trafficking and slavery in Australia](#).

## Report

If you suspect that you, or another person, is experiencing, or at risk of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices (including forced marriage), or something is not quite right, call 131AFP (131237).

Or use the [online form to report information regarding human trafficking](#).

If you have immediate concerns for your safety, the safety of another person, or there is an emergency, dial **Triple Zero (000)**.

## Support

- [The Support for Trafficked People Program](#) is a key component of Australia's response to support victims of human trafficking, slavery and slavery-like practices, and is administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and delivered nationally by the Australian Red Cross.
- [My Blue Sky](#) is a national forced marriage service run by Anti-Slavery Australia.

## Acronyms

AGD	Attorney-General's Department
ABF	Australian Border Force
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
CDPP	Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DSS	Department of Social Services
Home Affairs	Department of Home Affairs
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
Support Program	Support for Trafficked People Program
UN	United Nations

## Endnotes

- [1 Estimating the dark figure of human trafficking and slavery victimisation in Australia](#), AIC Statistical Bulletin, 2019.
- [2 Global Organized Crime Index](#), Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2021.
- [3 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage](#), International Labour Organization, 2022.
- [4 AFP Annual Report 2021-22](#).
- [5 AFP Ministerial Direction 2022](#), Hon Mark Dreyfus KC MP Attorney- General.
- [6 At time of publishing, a targeted review of Australia's modern slavery offences in Divisions 270 and 271 of the Criminal Code was commenced. Led by the AGD in collaboration with the AFP and the CDPP, this review contributes to delivering the National Action Plan and findings will be provided to Government by mid-2023.](#)





# Look a Little Deeper

Recognise the indicators,  
know what to do.



Indicators



Report



# AFP

[afp.gov.au](http://afp.gov.au)

