



Australian High Commission, Kuala Lumpur

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Australia takes strong action against exploitation of foreign workers**

The exploitation of migrant workers in Australia is both illegal and unacceptable.

The Australian Government is taking strong action to eliminate organised criminal networks and unscrupulous employers and agents seeking to profit from exploiting vulnerable migrant workers. This action includes the establishment of Taskforce Cadena in 2015 and the Migrant Workers Taskforce in 2016.

Taskforce Cadena is a joint agency initiative between the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, its operational arm the Australian Border Force, and the Fair Work Ombudsman. It targets organised criminal networks and unscrupulous employers who facilitate illegal work and seek to profit from exploiting foreign workers.

The Migrant Workers Taskforce has been introduced to provide expert advice on measures that will deliver better protections for overseas workers. This includes:

- Increasing penalties for employers who underpay migrant workers and who fail to keep proper employment records.
- Deliver a \$20 million funding increase for the capabilities and workforce of the Fair Work Ombudsman, the agency responsible for tackling illegal work practices in Australia.

### **Visa Scams in Malaysia**

Recently, a number of visa scams have emerged in Malaysia. These scams may take the form of agents offering visas and flights to Australia for people to work illegally. These scams are deliberate attempts to mislead people into breaking Australian law, for money or other personal gain.

The Australian Government is concerned that many Malaysians are being taken advantage of by these scams and appeals to Malaysians' to understand what their visa or Electronic Travel Authority (ETA) allows them to do while in Australia. ETAs do not provide work rights in Australia and it is illegal to work if you are in Australia on an ETA.

Malaysians are also encouraged to ensure they deal through reputable and official channels when seeking Australian visas to protect themselves from visa fraud and scams. If you work in Australia in breach of your visa conditions, you may be detained and removed from Australia, and be subject to a three year exclusion period.

## Contact

If you are aware of, or suspect, a scam in relation to Australian visas, please inform the Australian High Commission, Kuala Lumpur by sending an email to [visakl@dfat.gov.au](mailto:visakl@dfat.gov.au) or report it to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection using the Immigration and Citizenship Online Report: [www.border.gov.au/about/contact/immigration-and-citizenship-online-report](http://www.border.gov.au/about/contact/immigration-and-citizenship-online-report)

More information on proper processes and reputable channels to obtain Australian visas in Malaysia are set out in:

- the website of our service delivery partner, VFS Global, who operate the Australian Visa Application Centre in Kuala Lumpur, visit [www.vfsglobal.com/australia/malaysia/index.html](http://www.vfsglobal.com/australia/malaysia/index.html)
- the Department's website, visit [www.border.gov.au](http://www.border.gov.au)
- If you would like to work or study in Australia you can use the Department of Immigration and Border Protection's Visa finder to search for a Visa that is suitable for you, visit [border.gov.au/trav/visa-1](http://border.gov.au/trav/visa-1)