



## Australian Sex Workers Association

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### **Briefing Paper October 2010 - Trafficking Prevention In Australia**

**Most trafficking is preventable** - Trafficking into the sex industry in Australia can be prevented with support services and access to information. Sex workers affected by trafficking are not forced into sex work but are often confused about their rights and as such can be deceived about their visas and work conditions. Sex worker communities in developing countries (Empower Foundation, Thailand) and developed countries (Scarlet Alliance, Australia) work collaboratively to ensure that sex workers are aware of their human rights through sex worker peer education information and referrals.



*Empower Foundation leads the procession for International Whores Day, Sydney Harbor, 2 June 2010*

**SCARLET ALLIANCE, Australia** is the peak body representing sex workers and sex worker organisations. Formed in 1989, our work includes defending the self-determination and human rights of migrant sex workers in Australia. Staff, volunteers, membership and leadership encompass sex workers of Thai, Chinese & Korean background.

**EMPOWER FOUNDATION, Thailand** formed in 1988, working with Thai sex workers and they currently have eight regional centers and were the 2006 winner of the National Thai Human Rights Award. Thai sex workers are heavily represented within the Trafficking Victim Support Program and are targeted for trafficking crimes in Australia.

**ZI TENG, Hong Kong** is a sex worker concerned organisation conducting outreach, resource development and policy representation in Hong Kong and Macau, working with Chinese migrant sex workers for over ten years.

Scarlet Alliance (Australia), Empower Foundation (Thailand) and Zi Teng (Hong Kong) have worked closely together on migration issues in the region—supporting sex workers, sharing information, training each other and discussing our experiences. Currently all three organisations participate on the Scarlet Alliance Migration Steering Committee (2005-present); Scarlet Alliance places AYAD volunteers with Empower Foundation (2008-present) and Zi Teng is a partner with Scarlet Alliance in research with Chinese sex workers in Australia (2005-present).



*Scarlet Alliance and Empower Foundation meet with Liz Broderick, Sex Discrimination Commissioner, June 2010*

**Sex Worker Organisations deliver genuine trafficking prevention services and referrals** - Between Jan-June 2010, Scarlet Alliance conducted 40 comprehensive outreach sessions and contacted over 600 sex workers, augmenting the 20,000+<sup>1</sup> annual contacts of our membership. Thai partner organisation, Empower Foundation, had contact with 842 sex worker in Northern Thailand through their conducted weekly outreach, running daily radio shows and quarterly workshops. These contacts with sex workers, both in Thailand prior to consideration of travel to Australia, and with Thai sex workers in Australia, provides trafficking prevention education, referral and human rights information.

**Quality prevention, referral work and sex worker peer education adds value to existing anti-trafficking investment by the Australian Government** - By translating visa information and the sex work laws in Australia, sex worker organisations work in partnership with Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Australian Federal Police and Attorney Generals Department. Between Dec 2009 and June 2010, sex worker organisations networked with over 20 agencies involved in the Australian response to people trafficking.

**Research to develop an evidence base – for programs that reflect the reality of trafficking** Scarlet Alliance is currently conducting a national research project in partnership with the Australian Institute of Criminology and will be reporting on contemporary trafficking issues in June 2011. Emerging trends include a need for ongoing education about: visas, laws, human rights and workplace conditions for migrant sex workers in Australia in Thai, Chinese and Korean languages.

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<sup>1</sup> Annual outreach statistics of NSW, WA, SA and Victoria 2006 – present