

MODERN SLAVERY STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION GROUP – PREVENT MINUTES

Date	Thursday 11 th September 2019
Time	11:00am-13:00pm
Location	2 Marsham Street
Chairs	Emily Kenway, <i>FLEX</i>
Present	Marissa Begonia, <i>The Voice of Domestic Workers</i> Sarah Brown, <i>Stop the Traffik</i> Eleanor Girling, <i>Just Enough</i> Philippa Roberts, <i>Hope for Justice</i> Imogen Schon, <i>Home Office</i> Rachel Smith, <i>Human Trafficking Foundation</i> Ruth van Dyke, <i>St Mary's University</i> Sally Wootton, <i>MSPTU</i> Vicky Lewandowski, <i>MSPTU</i> Pinky Badhan, <i>Cabinet Office</i> Paul Elms, <i>GLAA</i> Samantha Ferrell- Schweppenstedde, <i>Equality Now</i> Avril Sharp, <i>Kalayaan</i> Alexandra Millbrook, <i>Kalayaan</i> Andrew Wallis, <i>Unseen</i> Kate Roberts*, <i>Anti-Slavery International</i> Joyce Jiang*, <i>York University</i> Hardeep Walker, <i>NCA</i> Olivia Hesketh, <i>Home Office</i> Nicola Wright, <i>Home Office</i>
Apologies	Ella Cockbain, <i>UCL</i> Justine Currell, <i>Unseen</i> Michael Drew, <i>Home Office</i> Gavin McCullagh, <i>Home Office</i> Euan Fraser, <i>International Justice Mission</i> Cristina Gavrilovic, <i>Justice and Care</i> Amanda Read, <i>Border Force</i> Blair Buchanan, <i>SWARM</i> Carmel Bagness, <i>Royal College of Nursing</i>

*non-member thematic experts

ACTIONS ARISING

1. Chairs to circulate updated Terms of Reference, pending wording received from MSSIG Victims, and to gain membership's sign off via email prior to next meeting
2. Chairs and Home Office to work together to create a thematic session for the November meeting focused on immigration policy and how it impacts prevention work, as per the results of the member survey.
3. Chairs to circulate survey results and themes for next sessions based on those results.
4. Paul Elms (GLAA) to circulate the GLAA Prevention Plan to the membership.
5. Pinky Badhan (Cabinet Office) to present the outcomes of the communications campaign for frontline professionals at the next meeting.
6. Hardeep Walker (NCA) to present the findings of and assessment into the scale and nature of organised crime in relation to MSHT, with a focus on aspects relevant to this group to consider.
7. The Home Office is to find out about the possibility of having MSSIG minutes published on the IASC website and to report back at the next meeting.
8. Chairs to draft a statement reflecting the civil society members' view that current immigration policy regarding Overseas Domestic Workers is in conflict with government's anti-slavery objectives; to circulate to the membership for civil society member sign-on
9. MSPTU to connect with the Metropolitan Police regarding how they work on cases of potential exploitation of Overseas Domestic Workers to identify lessons which may help to improve prosecution rates.
10. The Home Office to commit to providing informative updates to the membership when possible regarding the status of information meetings for Overseas Domestic Workers.
11. Kalayaan to provide information to the Home Office regarding Sopra Steria and the levying of fees for services pertaining to leave to remain.
12. The Home Office to investigate Kalayaan's concerns regarding fees levied by Sopra Steria.
13. The Home Office to consider the recommendation for a system to be put in place that will enable Overseas Domestic Workers and their support providers to check the former's visa status online.
14. MSPTU to work on guidance for police on what to consider when confronted with an employer of an Overseas Domestic Worker making any form of complaint against that worker, such as abscondment, theft, such that police will be better equipped to interrogate the employment relationship and identify any indicators of forced labour. This should include consideration of how to ensure workers' contact information is kept confidential.
15. MSPTU to meet with Kate Roberts, Marissa Begonia and Avril Sharp in order to learn from them regarding case types and indicators of Overseas Domestic Workers in exploitation
16. The Home Office to provide information to the membership when possible regarding data collection on Overseas Domestic Workers since the Ewins' review, including to what extent data is being collected to assess the prevalence of worker abuse under differing visa systems.
17. Chairs to circulate Kalayaan's briefing with the minutes.

NOTES

1. Welcome and introductions

Apologies from co-chair Ella Cockbain who was absent due to illness.

2. Approval of the minutes

Approved.

3. Terms of Reference

Members requested one amendment such that the expectation of the membership that the

Home Office will provide responses to all actions and recommendations is clearly articulated; TOR will be circulated and signed off via email before the next meeting (Action 1).

4. Actions update from chairs

Emily Kenway (EK) noted that the actions pertaining to data collection were focused on the digitization of the National Referral Mechanism, but that she has since had an update from the Home Office that this is too close to completion for input to be feasible. The group can revisit this when the system is next refreshed. The Home Office will inform the group when such an opportunity arises.

Co-chairs circulated a survey to members between the last meeting and this, identifying priority themes. EK presented back the findings verbally and confirmed that the issue of most interest, after Overseas Domestic Workers (which was already the thematic focus of this meeting), is immigration policy and how it affects prevention work. Therefore, the next session will focus on this theme (Action 2).

5. Brief updates from attendees

Attendees provided verbal updates on their current work, as relevant to the 'prevention' focus of this body.

Actions arising from these individual updates are found at Actions 4, 5 and 6.

6. Updates from the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit

Imogen Schon (IS) provided an update on:

- *The Modern Slavery Innovation Fund*
- *The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery*
- *DFID work on child labour in Africa*

Olivia Hesketh (OH) responded to queries about NRM digitization and stated that it is broadly finalized. A new online referral form launched at the end of August.

7. MSPTU prevention work overview

Sally Wootton (SW) explained the MSPTU's work on prevention, including:

- 3 Ps team has been in place since mid June – its aim is largely to improve practice, and prevention is one of its key focuses
- They want to identify and share best practice with forces and partner agencies
- They are also looking at awareness-raising and will be putting the Modern Slavery Helpline on bus and car advertising
- They are considering how to improve the utility and management of Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders and Risk Orders, including improving their database and active management.
- They are looking at how to improve prosecutions of domestic servitude as they are aware many cases are only going through Employment Tribunals and not also through criminal courts.
 - *Kate Roberts (KR) noted that her experience has found this to be because police are not willing to investigate and that the evidence being within a private household creates a barrier. Avril Sharp (AS) said that when Kalayaan arranges a meeting between a client and police, the police will often decide not to take the case forward.*

8. Thematic session: Overseas Domestic Workers

Presentations were made by Marissa Begonia (MB) and Avril Sharp (AS)/ Alexandra

Millbrook (AM).

Several points made are reflected in Actions 8 to 18 above.

Additional points made by civil society groups:

- Preventing domestic workers from having the right to work whilst in the National Referral Mechanism pushes them back into exploitation, so this policy decision represents a conduit to re-trafficking and needs to be addressed (AS)
- Letters confirming Positive Conclusive Grounds decisions do not currently state that the decision gives victims the right to apply for Leave to Remain under Section 53 of the Modern Slavery Act and this should be addressed (AS)
- AS requested that Home Office provided written response to questions raised.
- Several members noted the conflict between the failure to ensure the Overseas Domestic Worker visa is applicable for a longer time period/renewable with the government's stated anti-slavery objectives (Action 8) – it was further noted by Ruth van Dyke (RVD) that the government had just announced changes to the Immigration Rules to enable overseas students to remain in the UK after their degrees and that therefore it was currently possible to amend Immigration Rules, despite Brexit uncertainty, and that this should be applied to this category of person too.
- Andrew Wallis (AW) noted that best practice would be for the government to return to the 2012 visa.
- MB noted that she is unaware of the GLAA working on enforcement in this sector and that this needs to begin happening.
- AW noted that the number of calls received by the Helpline pertaining to possible cases of domestic servitude is much higher than the number of cases seen in the NRM and that they will be trying to analyse why this drop-off is happening.
- Members recommended the Home Office consider methods for providing workers seeking entry to the UK on the Overseas Domestic Worker visa with clear pathways to contact support, such as providing them with the Unseen app, GLAA hotline number, unions and rights groups information.

9. Closing Remarks
