

ICAA



EMERGING
STRONGER
SHINING
BRIGHTER

IMMIGRATION & CHECKPOINTS AUTHORITY
ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Mission

We ensure that the movement of people, goods and conveyances through our checkpoints is legitimate and lawful. We administer and uphold our laws on immigration, citizenship and national registration fairly and effectively.

Vision

Inspiring **C**onfidence in **A**ll

Values

Integrity, **C**ommitment and **A**ccountability

ICA Pledge

We, as ICA officers, pledge to uphold our values of integrity, commitment and accountability.

We pledge to ensure secure checkpoint clearance; and effective administration of our laws on immigration and registration.

We pledge as part of the Home Team to make Singapore a safe and secure best home.

A nighttime photograph of the ICA Building in Singapore, a large, modern, white building with many windows. The building is illuminated, and its name 'ICA BUILDING' is visible on the facade. In the background, the Singapore skyline is visible with various skyscrapers lit up. The sky is dark blue.

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Commissioner's Foreword



“Moving forward, I am confident about the future, knowing that as we continue to rise to the challenges, ICA will emerge stronger and shine brighter as “One ICA Family”.”

Our Results

2014 has been yet another challenging year for ICA. Against the backdrop of a complex and evolving global security landscape as well as higher public expectations, ICA officers have remained steadfast to our mission to safeguard the safety and security of our nation.

First, let us review the results of 2014. ICA cleared 198 million travellers in 2014, a slight decrease of 2.5% compared to last year. The number of contraband cases detected at the checkpoints was 93,380, a 6% drop from 2013. The number of illegal immigrants arrested also fell by 41% from 600 in 2013 to 350 in 2014.

The decrease in the number of contraband cases detected and the number of illegal immigrants arrested could be attributed to stringent laws, enhanced border checks, increased enforcement efforts and greater community awareness, among other measures.

Enhancing ICA's Operational and Service Delivery Capabilities

Checkpoint operations have become increasingly complex over the years due to the constantly evolving security threats and increasing public expectations. To achieve more effective border security outcomes and ensure the future readiness of our checkpoint operating model, the Integrated Checkpoints Command (ICC) was introduced. Under the integrated concept, the current checkpoints are clustered into three domains (land, sea and air) that come under the purview of ICA. Each domain is led by a Domain Commander to helm all Home Team operations in the checkpoints under that domain. The Land Domain led the way as the first domain to come under the ICC on 2 January 2015. This will be followed by the Sea and Air Domains in April and October 2015 respectively.

The concept of an ICC is a milestone change not only for ICA, but also for the Home Team. It brings about better coordination for border security measures and enforcement actions, and provides a more effective response to incidents during normalcy and non-normalcy.

In the area of enhancing our service delivery capabilities, ICA launched the New Queue System (NQS) in May 2014 to provide faster service and greater convenience to customers who transact at our three services centres. Since its inception, the load levelling feature and the queue logic in NQS have resulted in shorter waiting time for our customers. This has translated to optimal resource deployment for ICA as well as effective time management for the customers when they visit our services centres.

Awards and Recognition

Whilst systems, processes and technology serve as enablers, our officers are the most important resource that makes the difference to ICA's operational and service outcomes. In 2014, 879 officers from the various schemes in ICA were promoted to their next higher grade. This was an affirmation of the training and developmental opportunities put in place for ICA officers to grow professionally and personally. ICA continues to invest in her officers through Degree and Diploma Sponsorships for in-service ICA specialists. This year, ICA awarded 30 Degree and 21 Diploma sponsorships to ICA specialists who have performed well and shown potential to take on greater responsibilities. We will remain committed to developing our officers and assisting them to fulfil their academic and career aspirations.

As a security-focused and service-conscious organisation, I am pleased to note that four officers were recognised with the PS 21 Star Service Award, 16 officers received the MHA Star Service Award, while another 121 officers were presented with the Excellent Service Award (EXSA) for providing exceptional customer service.

At the organisational level, ICA won several awards this year. ICA received the inaugural "Excellence in Border Management Award" by BORDERPOL, in recognition of our attainment of world-class standards in operational excellence. Biometric Identification of Motorbikers System (BIKES), a world's first innovation which leverages biometric technology to automate the immigration clearance of motorcyclists, won the Gold Award at the ASEAN ICT Awards (AICTA), as well as the Singapore infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF) Silver Award for Best Public Sector Product. iCollect, the world's first self-service facility that automates the collection of secured immigration documents, was conferred with the Excellence in Public Service Award (ExPSA) - Best Practice Award in the category of Service Delivery, as well as the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) Merit Award. iCollect also enabled ICA to emerge as one of the five winners of the Annual CIO 100 Awards 2014.

In addition, ICA received the Community Chest SHARE Programme Award (Gold) as well as the Community Chest Special Event Award (Bronze). The awards were given in recognition of our contributions and support towards Community Chest.

Appreciating Our Pioneers

As we recognise the efforts put in by our current pool of ICA officers, we have not forgotten the contributions of our pioneer ICA colleagues who have since retired from service. As a show of our appreciation for their past contributions to ICA, we had invited our ICA pioneers to attend the ICA National Day Observance Ceremony held on 8 August 2014 and the ICA Service Medals Ceremony held on 28 November 2014. In addition, we have also planned several upcoming events to be held in 2015, including a Home Team SG50 photo exhibition to pay tribute to our pioneers as well as a dinner that will be held in their honour.

Working with the Community - ICA Ambassadors

Since 2006, ICA has worked with our volunteers, known as ICA Ambassadors, to assist us in the dissemination of our messages on border security and identification amongst the general community. This valuable partnership has contributed to keeping Singapore safe and secure. I appreciate the dedication and efforts put in by our ambassadors, who have selflessly given their time to assist ICA in our outreach activities. ICA, in collaboration with our strategic partners and the community, will continue with our efforts to disseminate our messages to the community.

Moving Forward

As we review the challenges, significant events and achievements of 2014, I would like to thank our officers, our fellow Home Team colleagues, our ambassadors and community partners for working hand-in-hand towards keeping Singapore's borders safe and secure. Moving forward, I am confident about the future, knowing that as we continue to rise to the challenges, ICA will **emerge stronger** and **shine brighter** as "One ICA Family". Indeed, with a "Can-Do" mentality, "Be Better" attitude and "Collaborative" spirit, we will keep ICA's flag flying high in the years ahead.

MR CLARENCE YEO
Commissioner, ICA

Leadership Group



Mr Vijakumar Sethuraj
Deputy Commissioner
Policy & Administration

Mr Clarence Yeo
Commissioner

Mr Aw Kum Cheong
Deputy Commissioner
Operations

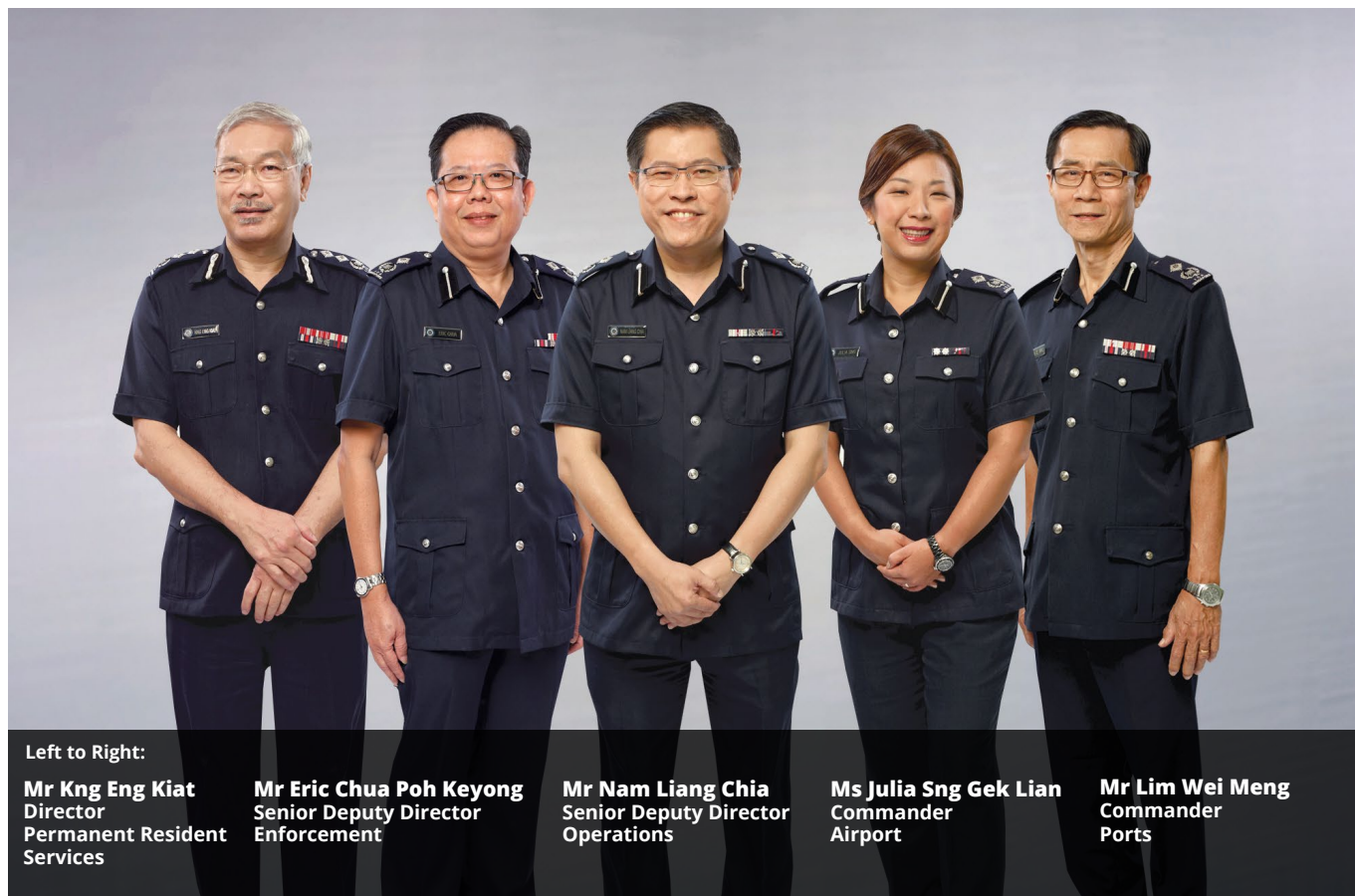
As at 31 December 2014

Leadership Group



As at 31 December 2014

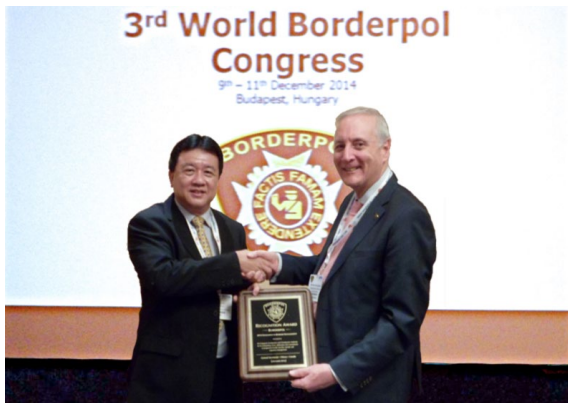
Leadership Group



As at 31 December 2014

Awards

Excellence in Border Management Award



BORDERPOL, the World Border Organisation, has been associated with international border security and traveller / migration management community since 2003 with historic ties to the former International Border Police Conference [1992-2012]. It brings border authorities together and works closely with senior border professionals, policy makers and academia as well as leading industry and private-sector bodies to promote policies and programmes that maintain and improve national and international security whilst facilitating the movements of genuine travellers.

The 3rd World BORDERPOL Congress was held in Budapest, Hungary from 9 to 11 December 2014. BORDERPOL introduced the “Excellence in Border Management Award” and ICA was honoured to be the inaugural award recipient. This award was conferred on national agencies in recognition of the attainment of world-class standards in operational excellence as well as a global benchmark of border management excellence.

ASEAN ICT Awards



The ASEAN ICT Awards (AICTA) is a project approved by the ASEAN Telecommunication Ministers. The project is in line with one of the six Strategic Thrusts, Innovations, as stated in the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2015.

AICTA wishes to recognise the best ICT achievements among entrepreneurs across the ASEAN region. AICTA aims to be the benchmark of success in terms of innovation and creativity, offering business opportunities and promoting trade relations, strengthening ICT and community awareness, both locally and internationally. ICA's Biometric Identification of Motorbikers System, a world's first innovation that leverages biometric technology to automate the immigration clearance of motorcyclists, has been conferred the Gold Award in the “Public” category at the AICTA 2014 Ceremony.

Singapore infocomm Technology Federation Awards



Singapore infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF) organises the SiTF Awards to promote and recognise local innovative Information, Communications and Media (ICM) applications/solutions developed by companies and institutions, providing them the opportunity to showcase their innovations.

In this year's competition, SiTF received more than 200 nominations. Entries were judged on various aspects such as technology and innovation, value to public, functionalities and features. The winning entries were selected after stringent evaluation process by a panel of luminaries from the ICT industry, venture capitalists, investors and academia. ICA's Biometric Identification of Motorbikers System clinched the Silver Award in the category of “Best Public Sector Product”. This achievement in SiTF 2014 is a reflection of our continuous efforts to use technology in developing innovative solutions to provide greater convenience to our customers without compromising security.

Awards

Excellence in Public Service Awards



The Excellence in Public Service Awards (ExPSA) - Best Practice Award (Service Delivery) aims to encourage public agencies to adopt innovative service delivery initiatives that embody service principles, adopt a whole organisational approach to service, and demonstrate inter-agency coordination in service delivery.

The accolade garnered by iCollect, a facility that allows Singapore citizens, permanent and foreign residents to collect their immigration documents at a self-service automated facility, clearly indicates ICA's commitment and drive to be a global leader in border security and identification.

CIO 100 Awards



The annual CIO 100 index, coordinated by the leading regional enterprise IT magazine CIO Asia, published by Executive Networks Media, recognises regional enterprises and organisations that have excelled through creative and innovative IT projects.

iCollect is the world's first self-service facility that automates the collection of secured immigration documents through the innovative use of biometrics for identity verification and Radio-Frequency Identification technology combined with intelligent robotic arm mechanism for document retrieval. It benefits the entire Singapore population - Singapore citizens, permanent and foreign residents.

World Information Technology and Services Alliance

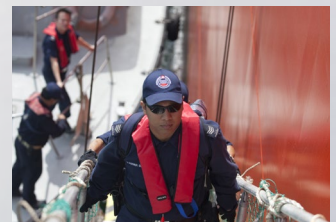
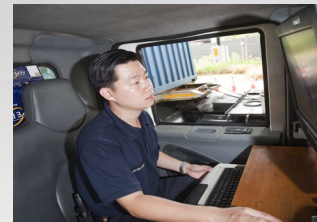
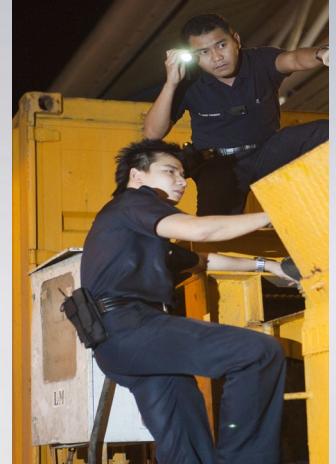


The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) is a consortium of over 80 ICT industries from economies around the world, including Singapore. Singapore's coordinating body for WITSA is the Singapore infocomm Technology Federation (SiTF). As the global voice of the ICT industry, WITSA is dedicated to:

- Advocating policies that advance the industry's growth and development.
- Providing members with a vast network of contacts in nearly every geographic region of the world.
- Hosting the World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) every two years.

For winning the "Gold Award" in the category of "e-Government" at the SiTF Awards 2013, SiTF had nominated ICA's winning entry, iCollect in the "Public Sector Excellence Award" category. ICA won the WITSA 2014 - Merit Award.

Our People



Our Stories

In the face of challenges, ICA officers have soldiered on and come together to work in unity to ensure the safety and security of our nation. The following pages feature the stories of ordinary ICA officers - both in-service officers and retired ones, who have overcome difficulties and remained steadfast in discharging their duties with professionalism, commitment and dedication.

Our People, Our Stories



**CSO 1 Lim Yah Sim,
Citizen Services Centre**

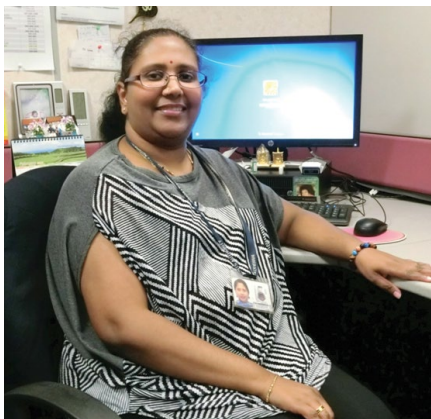
Time really flies. Before I knew it, it has been 37 years that I have put in the various departments within the government sector. I had been through various postings at Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Alexandra Hospital. In January 2001, I was posted to the Singapore Immigration & Registration (SIR).

The posting to SIR was the beginning of a challenging period as I was required to use the computer in my daily work. I was IT illiterate to the point of not even being able to hold a mouse properly. I was also handicapped as my English vocabulary was limited. With the fear of not being able to manage my new job, I requested my manager to deploy me to another job. However, she persuaded me to stay on and try to overcome my difficulties.

I sacrificed countless hours of my free time learning how to use the

computer and brushed up on my English. It was definitely not an easy task trying to understand computer jargon with my limited English. At times, I felt afraid that I would fail in this endeavor, but due to my manager's and colleagues' constant advice and support, I overcame my fears and I am now confident in what I do.

I would like to thank the people that I have met at work. They believed in me and encouraged me to learn new things. The experiences, knowledge and friendships gained made me into who I am today. I strongly encourage all civil servants to remain true to their jobs as well as themselves. Learning is an ongoing process in life. Be open, ready and willing to learn new things. Do not let inexperience or fear hold you back. You will never know what you can do unless you try.



**CSO 2 Vijayaletchemi
Subramaniam,
Citizen Services Centre**

I joined the Singapore Immigration (SI) in 1989 and experienced the transition from SI to Singapore Immigration & Registration (SIR), and finally to Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA).

ICA is a customer-centric and security-focused organisation. As a frontline officer, ICA provided me with learning and training opportunities to equip me with the soft skills needed to serve members of public, without compromising security. With these skills, I was able to handle difficult customers in person and over the phone.

One thing I learnt is that in the course of our work, we may be repeating the same generic information to members of public. However, we must be conscious that to the

member of public, it may be the first time that he/she is receiving the information. Therefore, we must learn to empathise, be patient, and to always provide the information in a positive note and with a smile. Whenever, I come across an angry member of public, I always remind myself that he may just be frustrated with the situation and is not picking on me intentionally. Thus, I can remain positive and continue to serve the members of public with professionalism.



Our People, Our Stories



**MSO 8 Zuraimi Bin Rahmat,
Citizen Services Centre**

I joined ICA on 27 March 2013. I was first attached to Passport unit at Citizen Services Centre and subsequently to Citizenship unit on 11 April 2013, where I have been a front counter officer since. Even though I have only about 1.5 years of experience, I have learnt a lot in my role as a front counter officer. While most of the members of public are reasonable and kind, a small minority of them may present us with difficult requests or speak to us harshly. Some may even turn abusive!

Initially, I thought of giving up. I thought of leaving ICA to find another job as I could not take the stress of dealing with difficult customers. But my family and friends had never stopped supporting me throughout this difficult journey. My colleagues and superiors have encouraged and also given me much valuable advice on managing the demands of my role.

To understand the customer psyche, I did research by reading up on customer service. I practiced what I learnt and have received positive feedback from the customers I served. Obtaining compliments and seeing smiles make me understand that I have done well. All these have kept me going. To de-stress, I will play sports or chill out at cafes.

I learnt that there are different solutions for different situations. No single solution can be used for every situation. However, the way we carry ourselves is very important as we represent the Government. Being positive and smiling more will show that the organisation I represent is committed to providing outstanding service. I would like to encourage all frontline officers in ICA to look smart, be attentive and courteous. In doing so, the members of public will appreciate your efforts.



**CI(2) Lakshmanan
Sutthiyavani,
Visitor Services Centre**

I joined ICA on 24 October 1977 as a fresh faced 21-year-old. Since then, I have been through several postings - Woodlands Command, Airport Command and the Visitor Services Centre (VSC). In 2007, I was offered a change of scenery when I embarked on my overseas

posting as a visa officer, attached to the Consulate-General in Chennai. Upon returning to Singapore in 2009, I was given a second stint at VSC.

In my years of service, I have experienced numerous challenges. However, there are several challenges which have shaped me into the officer I am today. I remember coming to VSC after having been deployed to the checkpoints for a considerable period of time. As a new officer in a new environment, I had to quickly adapt to different practices and procedures. I learnt to work fast and independently.

I recalled the difficulty I had in learning how to use the various computer systems. As a member of the older cadre of immigration officers who put pen to paper, computer systems proved to be complex and challenging. Yet, I took this in my stride and persevered, teaching myself to use the various systems correctly and quickly.

I have learnt several lessons that I believe will benefit the next generation of ICA officers. Firstly officers must have a thirst for knowledge. This thirst will push officers to continue to upgrade themselves, seek out answers and continue learning. It will create an independent group of officers who are able to serve the people efficiently and effectively. Officers must also be disciplined as I believe discipline will create a dedicated group of ICA officers. It is through adversity, hardship and challenges that an ICA officer can develop into an ideal ICA officer.



Our People, Our Stories



**CI(1) Siti Norhayati
Bte Solihen,
Visitor Services Centre**

In 1977, I joined ICA (then known as Immigration Department). I started my career in the Task Force Tracking Unit and slowly moved on to other units in Woodlands Command, Airport Command and Enforcement Division. In 2005, I was posted to the Consulate of the Republic of Singapore in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Upon returning to Singapore in

2007, I was posted to the Visitor Services Centre (VSC).

ICA's diverse functions have helped to mould me into a tough as nails and hardy veteran. I remember fondly each posting and its unique experiences - role-playing as part of the Intel Team, handling high passenger volumes at Woodlands and Airport Commands, embracing new cultures as an attaché to the Consulate of the Republic of Singapore in Dhaka, Bangladesh and dealing with exacting and demanding customers at VSC.

My career in ICA had not been without any setbacks. In August 2013, two weeks before my daughter was to be married, I was diagnosed with Stage 2 Plus breast cancer. The doctors labelled my cancer 'aggressive' and advised me to undergo 14 cycles of chemotherapy. I received another blow, when my cancer progressed to Stage 3 right before a major operation. Despite

several setbacks, I proceeded with the operation which successfully removed my tumour.

This ordeal has helped to strengthen my resolve to embrace life to its fullest. Despite the odds, I am determined to stay strong for myself and my family. I adopt a positive mind-set when I take my medication. I returned to work in August 2014, determined to work hard and fully utilise the opportunity given to me. Work helps to occupy my mind and keeps me on my toes.

Through it all, I have learnt many useful lessons which I believe will benefit other officers. I believe that anger is futile. I choose to remain calm in the face of adversity and to only let positive thoughts steer my course. Officers should therefore adopt a positive attitude when performing their day-to-day duties. It will enable them to serve members of public without prejudice and with patience.



**MSO 6A Ong Gek Hiok,
Technology Division**

I first joined the National Registration Office in 1977, way before the formation of ICA in 2003. By 2015, I have served the various departments for 37 years. Through these three decades, I would like to highlight one key challenge I faced in the course of my work.

In the early 80s, the Government embarked on a strategic initiative to transform herself, leveraging technology to streamline workflows and processes to improve data accuracy and boost productivity. I was involved in the "Re-numbering of High Rise Building" exercise in 1983 where I was involved in designing the

layout of the address in the address slips to be printed and despatched to the NRIC holders to be inserted into the pocket of the laminated NRICs.

After the successful completion of the "Re-numbering of High Rise Building" exercise, I was assigned to another IT project that dealt with national ID records. I was in charge of the data conversion function, responsible for converting the manual records from one data format to a new data format that could be recognised by the new IT system. I was in charge of a pool of 18 temporary staff for the conversion exercise. It was the first time I learnt to work with a big team. I was given a tight deadline of one year to complete the data conversion work. Hence every minute was important. Through close cooperation among the team members, we eventually completed the conversion exercise in eleven months, one month ahead of schedule. The whole team was jubilant with the achievement.

I learnt that every task can be accomplished if one puts in

conscientious effort based on one's experiences and knowledge. One must not be discouraged if things are not in order but be positive and persevere to the end. In addition, one should always think of solutions rather than the problem. Every challenge is a learning experience, and team work is crucial to success. Be courageous and not to be put off if one encounters challenges. Remember this is a test to build your character and resistance. If you can overcome the problem, you will emerge stronger to face future challenges. I strongly believe that the good work you have contributed to the department, no matter how small it is, you will be rewarded in one way or another. You reap what you sow. It is important to work as a team. In this way, everyone can achieve his/her career aspirations.



Our People, Our Stories



**INSP Sutarsan s/o Jaganathan,
ICA Training School,
Manpower Division**

I joined the then Customs & Excise Department in 1981 as a customs officer. My biggest challenge was in 2002 when I was first posted to Ports Command to learn how to operate the new cargo scanning system and analyse the scanned images effectively to detect any attempts of smuggling. I spent nearly nine years to master the skills in interpreting scanned images. In 2011, I was posted to Woodlands Command and I had to pick up immigration clearance skills from scratch having spent the past 30 years doing goods clearance.

I am now attached to Training School as a trainer on attachment. As a trainer, I have a heavy responsibility to impart the right set of skills and techniques to the younger ICA officers. Through my engagements and interactions with our foreign counterparts, I note that they

regard ICA as one of the best checkpoint authorities in the world. Thus, as ICA officers, we must don our uniform proudly and be professional in executing our duties as guided by our departmental values of Integrity, Commitment and Accountability.

In June 2014, I was promoted to the rank of INSP through the rank and file. I am humbled by this promotion and am grateful for the opportunity to prove myself.



**ASP Chua Yi Ying,
Corporate Communications Division**

Two and a half years went by and it was indeed a challenging but fun experience being the volunteer manager to the pool of ICA ambassadors (volunteers) - organising appointment ceremonies, appreciation lunches, training and dialogues for them. During this short period, I had forged great bonds with the ambassadors who are very passionate and dedicated individuals who act as our links to the community to share ICA's keys messages on border security and identification. Our ambassadors come from all

walks of life ranging from teachers, taxi drivers, HR / Finance / Marketing managers, sales executives, businessmen to retirees. The differences in their life experiences meant that I had to learn to communicate with them so that I can understand them better. Only when they know that you care for them will they feel a sense of belonging to ICA. It is so heartwarming to see amongst the current pool of ambassadors many were re-appointed ambassadors who want to continue to contribute to ICA's community engagement efforts.

The fun part of being a volunteer manager is working alongside our ambassadors at outreach events such as exhibitions and talks to share ICA's messages with the community and also at activities organised by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). To end, I would like to share a quote by Elizabeth Andrew that I like very much - "Volunteers do not necessary have the time, they just have the heart". I believe all of our ambassadors have the heart, passion and commitment to continue to contribute to the safety and security of Singapore despite their busy schedules.



Our People, Our Stories



**MSO 6A Ong-Chong Nyuk Lan,
Corporate Communications
Division**

I joined service in 1977 and am currently deployed at the Customers Relations Branch (CRB). Through the years, I have encountered some major challenges. One of the major challenges was when I was newly posted to CRB as a frontline officer. I had to quickly familiarise myself with the new environment and work situation. In addition, as I was more fluent in the Chinese language, the need to converse with members of public in English added to my work stress.

However, I have learnt to accept the challenges. I have learned to be resourceful and to approach my colleagues and supervisors for help and advice when necessary. At the same time, I have to improve my written and spoken English by reading more English articles and newspapers and listened to English news broadcast on television.

I learnt that there are no challenging customers. There are only challenging situations. As customer service officers, our duty is to serve the public and we must have the willingness to help them. We must be a good listener, be proactive and provide alternatives. I would like to encourage the younger officers that nothing is impossible! You must have the "Can do" mentally and "Can achieve better" instinct to tackle challenges.



**ASP Tong Weijie,
Operations Division**

The year 2014 started as a tumultuous year for ICA. My work unit, Operations Planning Branch, was involved in several events such as the post-incident management of security incidents and the manning of Ops Cell. Despite this demanding period, I saw ICA officers displayed solidarity, professionalism and perseverance to overcome the many challenges faced by ICA. I am also grateful for the guidance and leadership given by my superiors as well as the strong support provided by my fellow colleagues in Operations Division.

Having experienced these events, I believe the organisation and my

work unit have emerged stronger and better prepared to deal with the future. This was evident from the successful conduct of Exercise Hercules II, which was meant to validate the operational readiness of ICA in its roles in the management of checkpoints, immigration and registration prior to and during a National Emergency. Assessors had commended ICA officers' enthusiasm and performance during the exercise as they displayed their expertise in their field of work. I hope ICA officers can continue to stay true to our vision of 'Inspiring Confidence in All'!

Our People, Our Stories



**ASP Goh Siak Hong,
Enforcement Division**

On 1 October 1977, at the age of 20, I started my career with the Immigration Department as an immigration officer at the Woodlands Checkpoint. I was subsequently transferred to the Investigation Branch of Enforcement Division, then known as Immigration Field Division to be an investigation officer in 1981. The specialised investigation training and courses have equipped me with valuable interview and investigation skills required of an investigation officer.

I recalled that sometime in 2007, our team was tasked to handle a case involving a syndicate which arranged for foreign nationals to enter Greece using high quality fraudulent passports of another country. During the investigation, our team faced tremendous challenges and obstacles. We had difficulties ascertaining whether the said

foreign nationals were indeed the rightful holders of the fraudulent passports. However, we persevered to the end to find substantial evidence in our case and managed to cripple the syndicate.

Through my years of experiences as an investigation officer, a clear takeaway for everyone is that we should stay calm and composed whenever we encounter any obstacle or problem at work. We should approach our supervisor or experienced colleagues for advice. We can always rely on the camaraderie of the team to overcome the obstacles eventually. We should always adopt a positive attitude and give our best in whatever tasks assigned to us. Eventually, we will be rewarded for the hard work and effort we have contributed.



ASP Christopher Gomez (6th from left), Enforcement Division

There were many challenges that I have encountered during my career in SIR and then in ICA. One such challenges was sometime in the year 2001, when the Department had to send two teams of officers to be stationed at Ang Mo Kio Police Division HQ and Bedok Police Division HQ to work with the Police in tackling offences of harbouring & employing of immigration offenders. Although I was apprehensive about being selected to be stationed at Ang Mo Kio Police Division, I took on the challenge and the stint there broadened my knowledge and understanding of the Criminal

Procedure Code. The knowledge and exposure have helped me a great deal especially in investigation work. Another major challenge was when I was promoted to the senior officer rank of Inspector in the year 2009. Our Commissioner's words that everyone's eyes would be on me and I must not let him down have motivated me to strive to do my best as a senior officer.

I am a person who believes very much in leadership by example and it has made me what I am today. It has helped me to overcome the challenges in my career in ICA and

to do well in all my tasks. From the challenges that I faced, I have gained better understanding of the department's values and goals. I have also self-reflected and improved myself as a civil servant and a leader to my officers.

I would encourage other officers to be positive and take on all challenges in their career as a learning journey. They should know their jobs well and be prepared to face new situations in the course of their work. We must be confident and proud to be ICA Officers.



Our People, Our Stories



**CI(2) Sam Samudra
Bin Mizzy Ahmad,
Enforcement Division**

"It's an eye opener!" that will be my answer if you were to ask me about my current posting as an Investigation Officer (IO) in the Special Investigation Branch (SIB) of Enforcement Division (ED). I have been in ED since September 2010 and each case that I investigate is a learning experience, regardless of the complexity. Some cases teach you a lesson in humility - a trait which I believe all IOs should possess. SIB is also a place not short of inspiring stories.

A story I would like to share is my first lesson in humility which arises from a case of a sham marriage between a male Singaporean and a female Vietnamese. I had initially thought that all sham marriage cases were the same. The accused in this case was uncooperative and at that point, I got impatient and commented that his case was merely one of the hundreds which I had handled. It was then that he stood up and shouted "To you, I am a mere number but to me, it's my first time being investigated. I know you people only want to hear a confession but do you care how I feel right now?" His

outburst stung me and I apologised. From that day onwards, I would always place myself in the shoes of an accused in order to better understand the anxiety he feels while being investigated. Being able to empathise with and respect an accused is an important aspect in an interview. By doing so, the IO would earn the respect and even a thank you from the accused, in spite of knowing that he would be sent to prison subsequently.

There is no denying that an IO may experience high levels of stress and there may be occasions when the thought of giving up surfaces. However, having the passion for investigation work, coupled with the camaraderie and support from colleagues and supervisors, drive me to soldier on. On a personal level, I would encourage every ICA officer to try out investigation work in ED to learn more about Singapore's legal processes, the functions of various ICA work units and government agencies, and also learn to think and analyse critically. So, are you ready for an eye opener?



**CI(2) Ng Chong Ling
(2nd from left),
Enforcement Division**

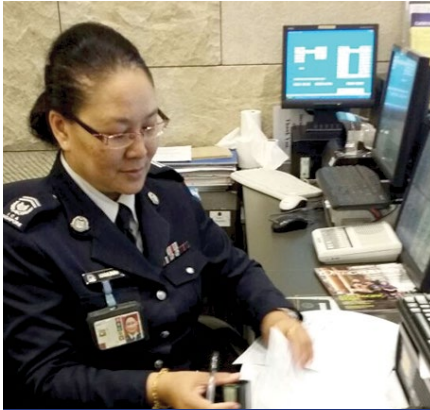
I joined the Customs & Excise Department in September 1993 after completing my National Service. In April 2003, the Singapore Immigration & Registration and a part of the Customs & Excise Department merged to form the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority. In October 2010, I was posted to Investigation Branch (IB) as an Investigation Officer (IO).

In my first few months in IB, I was facing difficulties handling the cases assigned to me. However, I was fortunate that whenever I encountered difficulties handling a case, there were always helpful colleagues and supervisors who would assist and guide me. I feel that

the most important thing to working in IB is that you must have a right attitude to learning. You may not be able to use the same technique to solve a similar case and the outcome of cases are different. If you need to ask someone for advice, just do it. You must not be shy or keep the matter to yourself, or else you would not learn anything. If you face any difficulty during investigation, you must not give up easily.

I would encourage every ICA officer to experience investigation work at IB at some point in their careers. One would be able to learn more about Singapore's legal processes as well as the functions of other ICA work units.

Our People, Our Stories



**CI(2) Maimunah
Bte Hussain,
Airport Command**

I have been with ICA for over 30 years and have seen the organisation grow from strength to strength. The major challenges that I had faced professionally were the increase in workload, coupled with rising customer expectations and the increased use of technology.

Over the years, I had learned how to cope with the challenges that came along with this job. It helped greatly that ICA continuously offered training courses to staff to build up their level of competency and knowledge.

On the personal side, the challenge that I faced was that I had a bedridden mother of five years during my career. It was extremely strenuous and taxing for me physically and mentally to juggle both work and being a

caregiver. However, my passion for the job and the support and assistance from my colleagues made me persevere.

The professional and personal challenges encountered throughout my years of service changed me from a young lady to a veteran officer I am today. My advice to our younger colleagues - Be confident in your own capabilities and always seek to surpass your limits.



**SSGT Mustaffa
Bin Mohamed Salleh,
Airport Command**

I joined ICA on 8 January 2007. I am blessed to have the opportunity to learn and grow with an organisation like ICA. My first posting was to Woodlands Command and subsequently to Airport Command where I am currently. A key constant

at work is the need for a human touch when clearing passengers.

Early 2014, I helped an arriving autistic male Singaporean who had strayed to the wrong terminal. I managed to contact his anxious father to inform him of his son's whereabouts before guiding the son back to the right terminal and helping him with immigration clearance. Thereafter, I assisted to collect his checked-in luggage before reuniting him with his father.

Upon seeing his son, the father started berating me, saying that he had already engaged a wheelchair service to prevent his son from getting lost. I remained calm as I understood that the father was worried about the well-being of his son. I attempted to calm him by explaining that my

help to his son arose from the ICA Departmental Values of Integrity, Commitment and Accountability ingrained in me. I also informed him that I was unaware of the wheelchair facilitation. The father finally realised my honest intent and thanked me for my efforts. From this episode, I would like to share with all officers to make use of the empathy that exists in all of us and we should all strive to deliver excellent service without compromising security, no matter how trying the circumstances may be.



Our **People**, Our **Stories**



**SSGT Fadli Bin Ali,
Airport Command**

I joined ICA in August 2005. Currently I am deployed at Changi Airport. The daily commute to my workplace is a challenge as I live in Jurong West. It is challenging to me because of the travelling distance and time required for me to commute from Jurong to Changi.

I had to overcome this challenge by looking for options which best suited my needs. Challenges that ICA is currently facing include the expected increase in passenger traffic and higher expectations from the public on our service delivery. I want to encourage everyone to treat your job in ICA as a career and not just an ordinary job. We must be mentally resilient in dealing with the challenges that will come our way.

Learning from our seniors will allow us to pick up the relevant skills to manage the challenges at work. Working in any of the checkpoints has its own set of challenges. Teamwork is vital as we can then motivate each other to bring ICA to greater heights.



**CI(1) Srikisan s/o Ramdas,
Air Cargo Command**

I joined the then Customs & Excise Department on 1 February 1978. I have been in my current command - Air Cargo Command since 26 March 2008. As a frontline officer, we may meet some difficult customers. However, as long as we are professional, firm and tactful, our customers will understand that we have a job to do and a mission to uphold. We should never be rude or shout at difficult customers. I would like to advise my fellow colleagues to work hard and embrace the challenges that we face as ICA officers. We should continue to learn and upgrade ourselves, be committed to the work and be honest in the dealing with people. We have to know our strengths, weaknesses and limitations, and to work hard to reinforce our strengths and to reduce our weakness.



Our People, Our Stories



**SSGT Mohamad Huzaifah
Bin Bahron,
Air Cargo Command**

I joined ICA on 16 May 2005, about two weeks right after I got married. I was first posted to Woodlands Command and subsequently to Air Cargo Command.

At my posting at Woodlands Command, I was initially overwhelmed by the huge crowd that passed through the checkpoint on a daily basis, as well as the numerous work processes. Being newlywed and a rookie ICA officer, the work challenges had somehow affected my work-life balance. However, I had to overcome the difficulties and to adapt to the work environment fast. And I did.

My next posting was to Air Cargo Command in 2010 where performing cargo clearance duties provided me with a new challenge. Guided by a good and experienced mentor,

I quickly familiarised myself with the relevant work processes. I was able to produce good case results and at the same time garnered some awards - such as the quarterly Best Staff Award.

Besides being able to manage time and stress, one must also view new challenges with a positive attitude and an open mind. Whenever in doubt, we must put aside our egos and ask our colleagues for help. This is especially so whenever one is new in a posting. Working as a team, we can help each other to become more proficient in our duties.



**SGT Mohammad Shairunizam
Bin Mohamed Hanifa,
Air Cargo Command**

I joined ICA on 6 November 2007 and was posted to Woodlands Command. Currently, I am attached to Air Cargo Command. I am also in the final year of my part-time department sponsored diploma studies. I therefore have to juggle my time between studies, family and work commitments.

However, I managed to overcome the challenges. My family understands that with my studies and work, my time spent with them would be limited. My team members have also been supportive, allowing me to go for my studies and to apply for leave to study prior to my exams. Working with more experienced officers, I was able to tap on their wealth of knowledge. Equipped with the knowledge and skills, I was able to handle customers with ease and at

the same time obtain good cases. With the opportunity given by ICA for me to take up part-time diploma studies, I have had the chance to upgrade myself. I am thankful for the opportunity and therefore would encourage officers to keep on upgrading yourselves not only academically, but also in skills related to your personal lives and profession.



Our People, Our Stories



**INSP Shahdan Bin Sulaiman,
Woodlands Command**

I joined the Civil Service in late 1973 as a Customs Officer and became an ICA officer in 2003. During the initial stage of merger in ICA, there were various concerns among officers as to whether ICA, a newly formed organisation, would be able to cope with its mission, and also to inculcate its vision and core values of integrity, commitment and accountability.

The early days of ICA's formation were challenging times. I am proud of what ICA has achieved and I am glad that I was able to contribute in my own small ways. However, terrorism threats remain a possibility. Therefore, we as ICA officers must stay vigilant to ensure that Singapore remains a safe and secure best home for all.

I am grateful to ICA for giving me the opportunities to rise through the ranks of CI(2), SCI(1), SCI(2) and finally to the Senior Officer scheme. I will put in every effort and endeavour to give my best to this organisation which has nurtured and groomed me.



**INSP Ong Chai Seng,
Woodlands Command**

I joined Immigration Department as a young junior officer back in 1976 and have stayed on with the organisation since then, having gone through the two mergers from Singapore Immigration & Registration to the present Immigration & Checkpoints Authority.

I remember one incident in 2000 when I was still attached to Tuas Checkpoint as an Assistant Duty Officer. A Malaysian lady and her mother were referred to me for further interview as her mother did not meet entry requirements. Their

frustration was evident because the Malaysian lady raised her voice at me, accusing the department of being unprofessional. Upon further questioning and engagement with the lady, she explained that her mother was receiving treatment for cancer in Singapore as the quality of healthcare was better here. I managed to resolve the issue with her amicably after verifying the documents that she had provided to substantiate her claim. Her attitude towards me changed immediately. She thanked me profusely and also apologised for raising her voice at me earlier.

That incident left a deep impression on me. I realised that many travellers appeared frustrated at ICA officers due to weariness from travel and a lack of understanding of immigration and customs procedures. It is, therefore, our responsibility as ICA officers to ensure that travellers understand our requirements. We must also use our discretion when the occasion requires and also constantly upgrade our knowledge so as to better carry out our duties.

Outside of challenges faced at work, having to raise a family with two children at the same time has not been easy, especially when I have to perform shift duties. My family has always been supportive and understanding towards my career, understanding that as an ICA officer, what we do will have an impact towards the safety and security of Singapore.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank ICA for recognising my commitment to the organisation and for consistently giving me the training to upgrade myself. Regardless of an officer's beginnings, there will be ample opportunities for him or her to progress in ICA as long as they do their best. So keep the passion alive and soldier on!



Our People, Our Stories



**INSP Tay Kwang Meng,
Woodlands Command**

I have been in service for more than 13 years and spent most of my years working in the Intelligence Division. I was posted to Woodlands Command as an Assistant Duty Officer after I completed my full-time sponsored studies at SIM-RMIT in June 2013. I was able to join the Senior Officer (SO) scheme and thereafter, I was scheduled to attend the SO induction course as a trainee.

When my then Director (Intelligence) and Head (Data Analysis Unit) knew that I was shortlisted for studies sponsorship, they gave their full support and encouraged me to grab the opportunity. Following my

interview for the transfer of scheme, they readily assisted me with the documentation that was required to secure the sponsorship. My bosses as well as colleagues kept me abreast with ICA's developments throughout my course of studies. Most importantly, my family members were always there to support and encourage me throughout my course of studies, especially during assignments and exams periods.

The last time I was involved in full-time studies was more than 10 years ago. As such, it took me a while before I could adapt to school life and handle assignments and exams. It was also a challenge for me to interact and work with my fellow course mates who were much younger than me. It was challenging for me, especially during the exam period. I am glad that I have a supportive family and a sensible 4-year-old daughter.

By taking up full-time studies, it dawned upon me that I would have to exercise self-discipline and stay motivated in order to excel. Personally, I think that it is important to choose

a course of study that one has interest in so that the whole process is enjoyable and one would be driven to do well. I decided to take up a Degree in Business Management as I always had interest in the subject. Having background and prior knowledge in the subjects, such as financial accounting, was also a bonus. No doubt it was hard, but I was glad that I took up this path.

I appreciate the many opportunities for growth and development in ICA and I hope other officers can continue to do their best and work hard in their career in ICA.



**SCI(1) Yasmini Bte Mohammad,
Tuas Command**

I joined service as a junior officer in 1984. One of the major challenges that I have come across in my years working in ICA was the implementation of i-Borders. It was a challenging process because we had been so used to the old Entry & Exit Control Upgraded System and i-Borders was totally foreign to us. As Tuas Command was

the first checkpoint to implement i-Borders, we needed to learn and familiarise ourselves with both the Primary Screening Officer and Duty Officer modules fast. I adapted to the changes and accepted them as part of the challenges of my job.

Another challenge that I often face is dealing with disgruntled travellers. We all know travellers do not like to be delayed and expect swift and efficient clearance but as ICA officers, we also have the responsibility to uphold security. It is how we maintain security and yet provide excellent service that makes the job challenging. I believe that if we take the effort to explain to the travellers professionally and with graciousness, it will make the wait by the travellers more bearable.

To our younger colleagues: there may be instances where you feel that

you have done well but your action goes unnoticed. Do not feel discouraged. Just continue to do what you are supposed to do and you will eventually get the recognition that you deserve. Sometimes, there may also be occasions where you may have overlooked some aspects of our duties. When we do make such mistakes, learn from the experience, move on and strive to never repeat it. Most importantly, make use of any given opportunities to constantly learn from others and develop yourself into a better person.



Our People, Our Stories



SGT Mohammad Azhar Bin Zainal Abidin, Tuas Command

"Don't let what you cannot do stop you from doing what you can do". I would like to share the following story to serve as a reminder to us all that no matter what obstacles lay in our path, we can surmount it and emerge stronger than ever.

I was deployed to Tuas Command in 2006, shortly after completing my Basic Induction Course. I enjoyed my

work as a Primary Screening Officer until I heard a most unfortunate news from my doctor in 2008. I was diagnosed with Arterio-Venous Malforma in my left brain. This condition puts additional strain on the blood vessels and the surrounding tissues and may cause brain haemorrhaging. My whole world seemingly crashed overnight. However, with encouragement and support from family, friends and colleagues, I plucked up my courage and decided to undergo my first surgery in 2009.

The surgery was a success and I recuperated at home for about a year. During this time, I did not forget about my passion, working in the frontline, and made up my mind to return to work as soon as I could. The journey to full recovery and at the same time balancing it with work as an ICA officer was a difficult one. Since then, I have had a few more surgeries to improve my medical condition. In

view of my condition, arrangements were made to allow me to learn back-end work like Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System and Operations Room duties. With encouragement and support from family, friends and colleagues and together with my own perseverance to pursue my love for life and career in ICA, I slowly overcame my difficulties. I am grateful to be promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2014. In spite of my condition, I have since gotten married and am now a proud father of one.



ASP Sity Nuredha Bte Lockman (5th from left), Coastal Command

Throughout my career as an ICA officer, I have faced some challenges. These challenges have made my life and job in ICA interesting and memorable. As a newly posted officer to Woodlands Command in 2007, the traffic volume, clearing and dealing with demanding members of public were daunting.

One of the incidents that I can recall was being asked by a member of public on the reason for not allowing

him to bring in chewing gum. He then opened a packet of chewing gum, consumed it on the spot while demanding to see a senior officer. At that time, all I could do was to remain calm while explaining to him the rationale for performing those procedures.

My current posting in Coastal Command is interesting and fulfilling. Handling the Computerised Records of Crew system and dealing with

shipping agents present tough challenges. The shipping industry is more service-oriented and places profit-making over security whilst ICA is more concerned with security. Like members of public, shipping agents do not shy away from questioning ICA on its procedures.

To new officers, I would advise them to always remain professional and courteous when discharging their duties. We should not be provoked by demanding members of public, instead we should be guided by the department values of Integrity, Commitment and Accountability. Also do take the opportunities to learn from your colleagues, your supervisors as well as the more experienced junior officers. Do not be afraid to ask questions, as questions are opportunities where you can learn and understand the procedures to carry out your duties efficiently and effectively. May your journey in ICA be smooth sailing.

Our People, Our Stories



**ASP Lim Kian Beng,
Coastal Command**

I joined the Civil Service on 1 October 1977. Working in ICA has indeed been very challenging, especially in the years when there were many changes to operating procedures, working instructions and even the

computerised systems used for work. I have to constantly adapt myself to these changes and also develop a keen interest to learn new things. However, if I must point out a period where I found the work most challenging was during the opening of the new Tuas Checkpoint and Jurong Port Main Gate. I was involved in the administrative and logistics set up for these places, where one of the things I did was to assist in the set up of the Blacklist Record Section.

It was through our camaraderie, dedication and hard work that helped my team through that period. Despite the tedious and grueling work, we managed to overcome it as a team. It showed to me that with team spirit and active participation from everyone, difficult work can become less overwhelming.

I learned that when you work in ICA, you never work alone. In my humble opinion, working with others has allowed me to not only interact with others, but also learn from them. It is a mutual exchange of knowledge and experience.

I would like to quote the late Steve Jobs "The only way to do great work is to love what you do". Personally, I believe that when you are happy with the work you do, you will naturally develop a positive work attitude, and with it, one can attain remarkable results, regardless of the type of work you do.



**SCI(1) Chan Chee Fay,
Coastal Command**

Time has flown since I joined service 17 years ago. I have been posted to four Commands, namely Woodlands, Tuas, Airport and Coastal Commands. Each posting came with its unique challenges. All through my years of working, my aim is to know the job, perform the job well and get along with my co-workers. Knowing the job well was not just about learning new processes and procedures to meet Key Performance Indicators. It also involved familiarising myself with the new Command's environment, culture and any unwritten rules. More importantly, building a good rapport with my co-workers helped to smoothen my transition into each new posting. "Multi-tasking" was one of the ways I learned that helped me to gain confidence in my work. I took on any task or deployment - car counter, bus counter, motorcar lane, cargo,

baggage, fuel gauge checks and even assisted at the Secondary Team office.

I am glad to have good and experienced mentors along the way who provided me with work insight and encouragement. Helping new officers fit in and sharing my experience with all officers who want to learn more is my way of paying it forward. My advice to younger officers is to have the right attitude and a continuous learning mindset to tackle challenges that they will inevitably face in the course of their career.



Our People, Our Stories



**CI(2) Jelani Bin Ab Majid,
Coastal Command**

Being in service for more than 30 years, I have had the opportunity to experience and be part of the department's journey towards an "e-era". Honestly, it was a challenge for an old timer like me as it involved changing of mindset and attitudes towards IT which to me was something not taught in school or rather not heard of then. Fortunately for me, I had colleagues and supervisors who were encouraging and helpful during this transitional period. With commitment and the realisation on the need to change, I was not only able to embrace IT but also made full use of technology to help me in the detection of immigration offenders. I am proud to be part of ICA and will continue to work hard to ensure that Singapore remains a safe and secure best home for all.

An advice for all: Challenges in life are unavoidable and to remain status quo is not an option. As long as officers are committed and willing to learn, challenges, no matter how daunting, can be overcome. All in all, the right attitude will allow officers to inspire confidence in all wherever they may be deployed.



**CI(2) Suraya Bte
Abdul Hameed,
Coastal Command**

I joined the then Immigration Department on 15 March 1982. Since then, I have faced many challenges, be it personal or professional ones. In the line of duty, I have encountered travellers of different personalities - on one hand, difficult, insensitive or unhelpful and on the other hand, kind or friendly. I have learnt to adapt to the different personalities and situations in order to minimise problems and overcome tight situations. In the process, I have grown to be more patient, empathetic and humble.

Through the different situations, I have also learnt that it is not just about doing a good job at work professionally. Over the years, I have realised the importance of developing a good character as the job entails dealing with people, whether the travellers or my colleagues.

Another major challenge I have faced is the demands of shift work. The working hours of cyclic shift mean that it can be difficult to fulfil family commitments. However, we have to strive to put things into place in order to balance work and family commitments.

I was given an opportunity to work overseas. My overseas posting experience had taught me to think more widely. My posting overseas increased my level of patriotism and loyalty to Singapore. I value being a Singaporean more and my rights as a Singaporean. In turn, this has made me more empathetic to the foreign customers who arrive with challenging backgrounds. In addition to being professional and security focused, I exercise compassion in my interaction with them. All these have made me a more effective officer.

The job scope of an ICA officer exceeds the mere stamping of passports. Not only is it about being alert and quick-witted in order to uphold security, it is also about growing and adapting to different situations. One must have an open mind and be productive and committed in order to function effectively as a team and to make a difference. My advice to the younger ICA officers would be that this job entails more than it looks. It requires you to be a people-person due to a significant amount of time spent interacting with others. Most importantly, this job teaches you how to be a better human being. If we manage to look at each difficult situation through that perspective, then we would be able to manoeuvre, be flexible and overcome these situations with greater success.



Our People, Our Stories



**SSGT Jalajakumari d/o
Chellappan Pillai,
Coastal Command**

I have been to various commands in my 18 years of service. Through the years, I have seen tremendous changes from the then Singapore Immigration to the present ICA.

The world suffered a major blow in 2001 when the 9/11 terrorist attack

took place in the United States. The issuance of biometric passports and fingerprint recognition system are some of the changes that have been made to help officers counter the ongoing terrorist threat. Officers were trained in unarmed tactics, firearm marksmanship as well as emergency evacuation exercise and crisis management. Ground officers who were previously performing passport clearance were given duties such as surveillance and crowd control, and checking of baggage and goods.

Another major challenge faced is the impact of social media. Social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter can potentially blow issues out of proportion, creating misunderstandings between ICA officers and the members of public. In such instances, frontline officers have to maintain a professional front and minimise possible conflicts or adverse reactions from the members

of public. When such a situation arises, I would tell myself that this is not a personal attack on me but on the mistake made. My motto is - "never hide away from mistakes for mistakes are but a stepping stone for a better tomorrow".

I urge junior officers in ICA to see this job as an eye opener to the global situation and be versatile and vigilant in discharging their duties. I salute the officers in ICA as well as the other Home Team agencies in maintaining the peace and security of Singapore amidst the unrest in the world.



**CPL Nuraini Bte
Abdul Wahab,
Coastal Command**

On 13 July 2009, I started my journey with ICA. Through the years, there have been various challenges faced, both professional and personal.

One major challenge is the handling of passengers at the checkpoints. The passengers can be friendly,

appreciative or encouraging. A small minority can be arrogant, uncooperative or demanding. This behavior applies to both the locals and tourists. Through various encounters that I faced, I learned to adapt and be more empathetic, patient and humble in dealing with people, so as to maintain a sense of professionalism.

Another major challenge I faced was juggling school, overtime and fulfilling family commitments. This is in addition to the demands of shift work. I am grateful to have understanding superiors and colleagues who supported me throughout my duration of study. Completing my studies has given me a sense of satisfaction as I am able to put it to use within ICA. My course in Mass Communication has assisted me with my communication skills when interacting with both the passengers and colleagues. I am able to assist with investigations and sharpen my writing skills.

Before I joined ICA, I thought that being an ICA officer was all about stamping passports. However, experience has taught me that it is more than just people and goods clearance. It has definitely given me a new perspective on security as well as the global and local threats that are lurking around us. My respect for ICA and my colleagues grew during the challenging times of 9/11 and the terrorism threat. It is of utmost importance to ensure security while delivering world class customer service. My advice to younger officers is to think outside the box, be self-motivated, and to have a close-knit relationship with your fellow colleagues.



Our People, Our Stories



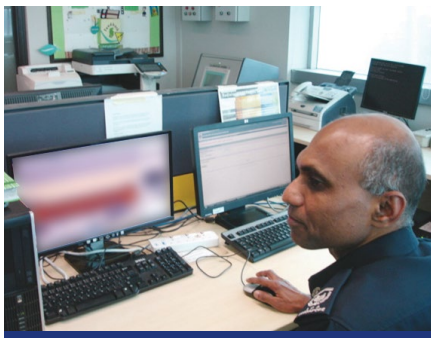
CI(1) Lim Yeow Seng,
Ports Command

11 years ago, I was diagnosed with Stage 3 of a rare form of blood cancer called Myeloma. Initially, I was in a state of self-denial before I decided to stop wallowing in fear and self-pity. I made up my mind to fight the cancer. Other than following my oncologist's advice closely, I adopted a positive outlook in life and at work. I exercised whenever my body allowed me to. The medication that I took to fight the cancer caused me to feel bloated, have blurred eyesight, shaking hands and burning sensations in my body.

Notwithstanding the physical difficulties, I persevered with a determination to excel in my work. I adopted a pro-active approach to work and try to share and impart what I knew to my younger colleagues. As the cancer in my body went into

remission, I was able to focus more on my work and became more competent in my job. In fact, I have come to enjoy my job more since being diagnosed with cancer. The worst is over for now (there is no cure for Myeloma and there may be a relapse again any time). I continue to serve as a Cargo Clearance Officer and hope to be able to contribute in other areas as well.

My word of advice for other ICA officers - "We should adopt a positive learning attitude and always be prepared to learn even when we are facing adversity. We must respect our position and role in our respective portfolios and always be polite and humble to our superiors, colleagues and our customers."



CI(1) Melvin Louis,
Ports Command

I joined the then Singapore Immigration & Registration (SIR) on 17 October 1998 as a Primary Screening Officer. On 1 April 2003, ICA was formed from the merger of the then SIR and the enforcement operations of the then Customs & Excise Department. When I was posted to Ports Command in 2007, I had to learn everything relating to cargo clearance from scratch. That was not an easy task, as I had spent the first nine years of my career performing

only immigration work. In 2012, at the age of 50, I further challenged myself by applying for the Part-Time Diploma sponsorship to pursue a 2.5 years programme in Police & Security Studies at Temasek Polytechnic. I knew that I would have to compete with students who were younger and I will need to manage my time effectively, juggling between work, family and studies in order to do well in the course.

Even though I was not proficient in customs-related work, I was given ample opportunities to learn and progress with each deployment within Ports Command. My seniors and supervisors also guided me and that helped me to adapt well at each deployment. I was also fortunate to have an understanding and supportive family, bosses and colleagues because without their support, it would not have been possible for me to focus on the programme.

I learnt that dedication, a positive mindset and an eagerness to learn are critical factors to make the most out of any experience. Also, ensuring a good balance between family, social and work commitments is also important to help me cope with work and course demands. I would like to encourage the younger officers to take up the sponsorship opportunities offered by the department to further upgrade themselves. If I can do it at over 50 years of age, they should be able to as well!



Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Tracing Team, Passports Unit, Citizen Services Centre

Contributed by: DSP Kong Yong Sin, Citizen Services Centre

On the average, 2,000 passport applications are received daily. This figure is approximately the same for passport collections. At Citizen Services Centre, we have a mission to uphold ICA's pledge to the public to process passports within a week on receipt of applications. Also to keep the waiting time within 15 minutes for those who make an e-Appointment with us. We are humbled by the numerous compliments received from delighted customers who lauded us for the smooth and efficient experience. We are proud to say that all this is achieved through the dedication and hard work of the staff from Passport Unit. Have you ever wondered who is responsible for transporting, sorting, tracing, storing and distributing the personalised passports? That would be us from the Tracing Team.

On a typical day, our Team has to sort out and file away about 2,600 newly produced passports. We collect and transport the newly printed passports from the production room to the storage room. All the passports

have to be filed properly and correctly so that they can be easily retrieved for collection. We also have to trace and prepare passports meant for collection by applicants who have made an e-Appointment the following day.

On a typical collection day, the process for e-Appointment customers is: the trays holding the passports will be prepared beforehand to allow for ease of retrieval and subsequent issuance. We also have to perform immediate, on-the-spot passport tracing for customers who walk in without any appointment. Every day, we have about 300 walk-in applicants without an appointment. With this volume, we have to work fast to avoid a long wait for the applicant. The traced passports will then be packed in sequence for issuance at the frontline counters. When a queue number is called at a collection counter, a staff (referred to as 'Runner') will have to quickly deliver the passport to our issuance officer at the counter. At the end of the day, we have to put the uncollected passports back to the cabinets.

As you can see, our days are constantly exciting, challenging and fast-paced. Our work literally involves all hands and legs. The number of passports we handle every day is staggering and we do the best we can. In order to ensure smooth operations, our Team will also put in extra hours to ensure that the passports are duly traced and safely stored. Yes, our job is physically demanding and the pressure can be tremendous. But united we stand as one vibrant team of dedicated, fun-loving people who share tight-knitted bonds with one another. Through our team spirit and strong camaraderie, we will stand up to the challenge and make ICA proud.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



New Queue System Project Team

Contributed by: SUPT Samantha Koh, Permanent Resident Services Centre

The New Queue System (NQS) was successfully commissioned at the three services centres namely, the Citizen Services Centre (CSC), Permanent Resident Services Centre (PRSC) and Visitor Services Centre (VSC) on 26 May 2014 to better manage the queues of members of public waiting for application or collection of immigration documents. It replaces the previous electronic Queue Management System (eQMS).

A project team led by PRSC and Technology Division with officers from CSC and VSC was tasked to revamp the eQMS. The key challenge for the Project Team was to conceptualise and design a queue system with built-in intelligence and business logics to carry out load levelling within and across the three services centres for efficient and dynamic queue management.

The team was not daunted by the scale and complexity of the project and collaborated closely with each other to overcome the challenges faced during both the conceptualisation and the implementation phase of NQS.

The team conducted a market search but could not find a queue system of comparable scale implemented in any local government agency or company for reference. There was also a lack of queue system that has a built-in intelligence for queue load levelling which adopts complex business logic of equitable magnitude like the ones required in ICA. The project team also faced a delicate task to operationalise the individual services centre's unique operational and queue management needs without undermining one another.

To overcome this, the project team worked closely with the project vendor to engage many counter officers and supervisors on numerous occasions to gather their operational requirements, brainstorm and discuss for a win-win approach and business logic for the NQS that best suited all the services centres. The team also put the new queue system under strenuous and comprehensive users' acceptance tests to ensure its reliability.

The project team also faced the challenging task during operation to

effectively cut-over to NQS without disruption to the services centres' operations or any inconvenience to members of public. The project team started planning for the rollout of the new system as soon as the tender was awarded to the successful supplier. Much effort went into planning and coordination with multiple vendors and services centres' staff in the pre, during and post system implementation, to ensure that the queue system cut-over was carried out timely, precisely and without glitches. The system was implemented one level at a time and took a total of seven weeks to complete. It was no mean feat to complete the removal, installation and testing of the queue system over a short weekend given the sizable number of counters before the services centres resumed operations the following Monday.

Apart from the team's strong camaraderie, mutual understanding and close collaboration among the services centres were essential factors that contributed to the success on the NQS implementation.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Public & Internal Communications Branch, Corporate Communications Division

Contributed by: MX 10 Serene Wong, Corporate Communications Division

2014 marked another exciting year for the team of Public & Internal Communications Branch (PICB) officers as they dealt with many challenging ICA related issues under the media limelight and coordinated momentous visits by our local and foreign counterparts. A noteworthy event was on 1 December 2014 when ICA signed a Joint Statement with the United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to explore the development of a Trusted Traveller Programme (TTP) to facilitate immigration clearance for citizens of both countries.

The TTP is a bilateral initiative which allows citizens of both countries to enjoy convenient immigration clearance via automated clearance kiosks at their major traveller entry points. PICB prepared a press release to publicise this significant event to both local and foreign media outlets. On the other hand, PICB also worked closely with colleagues from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the U.S. Embassy to put together a visit by the Commissioner, CBP and his delegation to Tuas Checkpoint to understand our ground operations.

To wrap up the distinguished guests' visit on a nice note, PICB coordinated a lunch, hosted by Commissioner, ICA for them following the visit. PICB officers worked together as a team and with the support from the various ICA Divisions / Commands to ensure that the event was a successful one.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Repatriation Branch, Enforcement Division

Contributed by: DSP Affendi Bin Tamby, Enforcement Division

"Here we go again!" my mind shrieked as news of rioting in Little India spread over the media that Sunday evening.

On the following Monday, Repatriation Branch (RB) officers looked at each other with expectancy as we all knew what would be required of us and we prepared ourselves quietly and diligently for the coming operation. Subsequently, when the call came, the first group of RB officers were ready to receive and process all persons who were due to be repatriated. The presence of our very own Deputy Commissioner (Operations) with us at that early hour spoke volumes of the extreme importance of the task at hand and the responsibility that had been placed on our shoulders.

In a matter of mere hours, daylight broke and all persons had been processed and safely housed. RB officers had worked seamlessly with Singapore Police Force, Singapore

Prison Service, and Ministry of Manpower officers to complete the processing and housing without any hiccups. However, the task was only half-done. Next came the herculean task of making arrangements for them to depart for their home country. Officers discussed vigorously on the best way forward and no stone was left unturned. In the end, a target of completing our operations before the weekend was set.

With the target clearly fixed in every RB officer's mind, officers employed every available resource that they could muster. Every RB officer immersed himself in the operation. In the last leg, our colleagues from Investigation Branch came and provided us with the key support to convey the persons to the airport. This was an unequivocal demonstration of professionalism, expertise, camaraderie and commitment by all the officers involved and was

nothing short of awe-inspiring. In the end, all persons were repatriated without incident.

The successful repatriation of the affected persons was achieved with no 24-gun salute, balloons in the air nor dancing in the streets. Officers went about their work as normalcy returned, ever ready to deliver our best and face up to any challenge that is set before us. At the end of the operation, we found that we had strengthened relationships and trust within Enforcement Division and the Home Team. The camaraderie created will build stronger bridges for cooperation in the future.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Skit Performers for ICA Service Excellence Day 2014, Air Cargo Command

Contributed by: ASP Tan Wan Shi, Air Cargo Command

Organising a skit performance for the competition in the ICA Service Excellence Day 2014 was no easy feat, especially when the officers involved were from different teams. However, all of us managed to come together as one and put up a good performance as we are committed to bringing it to fruition and we all wanted to do our Command proud.

All of us brainstormed together to come up with the storyline and script. We also assisted one another to construct the props and put together the costumes, even to the extent of recycling some of our personal

items to use as the materials. Each and every one of us played not just our individual parts well, but we also helped each other out whenever there were problems with the script and the performance itself. There were also umpteen times where we had to meet up on either our precious off days or came early or stayed back after work to practice. Throughout all the preparations, none of us ever complained about the time and effort spent in getting ready for the skit competition. We worked hard together and supported each other during the journey to bring out the best in everyone.

We were very thankful and proud of ourselves for showing such good teamwork, camaraderie, as well as the efforts and commitment in working towards a common goal. We always believe that we can do it and we can do the best. Our belief and efforts had paid off and we had emerged as the 1st runner-up for the skit.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Anti-Smuggling Team B, Coastal Command

Contributed by: SCI(2) Mohammad Sidek Bin Nordin, Coastal Command

Throughout my 40 years of service, this is the third time that I am posted to a seagoing team. Presently, I am leading team “Bravo” of the Anti-Smuggling Team, also known as AST in Coastal Command. I look forward to each day's work as no two days are the same. The day will be most rewarding if my team is able to detect cases on that day.

Throughout the years, AST ‘B’ has made many successful arrests and significant seizures of contraband and vessels such as wooden crafts,

tug boats and even ferries. I can still recall one recent case where my team members displayed total determination and commitment by going through manhole openings, waded in knee-high water in the confined, dark and slippery area of the water tank, in order to retrieve the contraband which was hidden in the anchor chain locker. These are such examples of the lengths that smugglers would go to hide their contraband to evade detection.

Even with the introduction of high technology gadgets, it is with

simple tools such as screw drivers, inspection mirrors, torchlights and experience (most valuable tool) that we are able to detect significant cases and discover secret compartments. Team work and years of experience are the most important factors which contribute to the success of the ASTs.

Our **People**, Our **Stories**



Mobile Scanning Team, Ports Command

Contributed by: SUPT Kum Leong Kay, Ports Command

Sharing a common Home Team mission and vision beyond individual Home Team agencies, ICA and other Home Team agencies often conduct joint operations and undertake collaborations to continually strive to make "Singapore our Safe and Secure Best Home". One of these joint operations that Ports Command participated was the 2014 Asia Security Summit - Shangri-La Dialogue that was organised by the

International Institute for Strategic Studies on 24 May 2014. Our Mobile Scanning Team (MoST) using the Z Backscatter Van was activated to conduct security sweep of the vehicles as part of the security regime implemented for the event.

The activation of MoST not only signifies strong Home Team collaboration, it also represents the confidence and responsibility

entrusted by other Home Team Departments on MoST's capability and efficiency, cementing Ports' continued journey towards being the lead command in cargo clearance and image analysis competencies.

Our People, Our Stories



Mr Sa'ad Bin Ali, Retired ICA officer

As I reminisce on my days in ICA, mixed feelings come gushing forth. Feelings of pride and satisfaction strike me, yet at the same time, I feel a fleeting sense of loss and ever the slightest twinge of sadness.

45 years. That's the total number of years that I have dedicated myself in the service of the former Customs & Excise Department (CED) and later ICA. I first joined the former CED as a fresh-faced Customs Officer at the age of 20 in 1968. I rose through the ranks and was promoted to the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Customs in 1984. I retired from ICA in 2010, and was subsequently re-employed as a full-time trainer with the ICA Training School at the Home Team Academy. I finally retired from service in 2013.

During the four decades whilst working to ensure the safety and security of the country I have made several lifelong friends – friends who have stood by me through the years, both in good and bad times. Through the years, I have grown, learnt and achieved much, on a professional and individual level. I would say with pride that as a trainer, I was able to impart my skills and knowledge to the ICA recruits, both senior and junior grades as well as the senior immigration / customs officers from

the region, to build up their capabilities so as to help them to discharge their duties at the checkpoints in a more effective and efficient manner. Despite the fact that I am not a degree holder, ICA has given me opportunities to train others with higher educational qualifications than myself. For my efforts, I was conferred with various awards such as the Long Service Awards and the Commissioner's Testimonial for outstanding efforts and contributions.

Looking back, I must say that I did not face much difficulties as a trainer, just challenges which I managed to overcome successfully. My key to successfully managing the challenges is to maintain a positive attitude, a down-to-earth personality and to continually learn and to upgrade my skills and knowledge. It is this positive attitude and support from colleagues that had helped me to carry on working whilst coping with my wife's illness and her subsequent demise four years ago.

Even though I have retired, I am still living life to the fullest by spending time with my children and grandchildren. I still actively keep myself updated by watching the news and keeping in touch with other ICA/CED officers, whether they are still actively in service or are already retired. Yes, no doubt about it, there



is a sense of loss and sadness whenever I think that I am no longer part of the organisation, and some of my longtime friends have since passed on. But life goes on. I am happy that the memories of my days in CED and ICA evoke positive feelings of pride and joy. Thank you ICA for these happy memories.

Our People, Our Stories



**Mr Goh Ching Ann,
Retired ICA officer**

I joined Immigration Department on 1 October 1970 as a Deputy Assistant Controller of Immigration. I reached my retirement age of 62 in 2007, and was re-employed till 2010, where I officially retired at the age of 65 at Tuas Command.

I was posted to Tuas Command on 1 June 2003, two months after the inception of ICA. Even though I was considered as a veteran, I had to learn new skills and knowledge pertaining to checkpoint clearance as I was performing administrative duties prior to my posting to Tuas Command. The formation of ICA also meant that I had to learn Customs & Excise Department clearance procedures relating to cargo and car clearance as well as familiarise myself with the latest legislations and rules.

As an experienced officer, I had the privilege to mentor many new officers, both senior and junior in rank. While it is important to have knowledge

of the latest operating systems and to be familiar with the various Standard Operating Procedures, experience also plays a vital part. Indeed, it is through experience that we learn to accurately read various situations and to develop the instincts needed to detect whether the passenger is actually lying to us, and to call their bluff accordingly.

I would like to share an experience where I had received a call from a member of public that his father, who was in the car with him and the other family members, was having a heart attack. He had requested that his family, including his father, be cleared quickly through the VIP lane. As my experience told me that the man did not sound very genuine, I offered to call for an ambulance to send his father to the hospital, but requested the rest of the family to proceed for normal clearance through the arrival car zone. However upon hearing my suggestion, the man informed that



there was no need for VIP clearance as his father's condition suddenly seemed better, and then proceeded for normal clearance instead.

I would like to urge our young officers to have a humble spirit so that we can continually learn from others. To the older and more experienced officers, I would like to encourage you to generously share your experience and knowledge with the younger ones, so that ICA can become better and stronger.

Our Ambassadors



Their Stories

Using the “many helping hands” approach, ICA has since 2006 appointed individuals to be ICA’s ambassadors to help ICA disseminate our messages on border security and identification to the community. The ambassadors are appointed to fixed terms after passing stringent security screening. Our ambassadors act as the vital link between ICA and the community in creating awareness of ICA’s messages through various platforms such as talks, exhibitions, block parties, etc to school students, foreign workers and residents. Regardless of their race, age group or background, all ICA Ambassadors have a common goal - to help ICA ensure that Singapore is a safe and secure best home for all. The following pages feature their thoughts as ICA Ambassadors.

Our **Ambassadors**, Their **Stories**



**Mr Chong Teng Kok, PBM, PBS -
ICA Crime Prevention Ambassador**
8 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

My working experience was put to good use when ICA adopted the “many helping hands” approach and asked me in 2006 to establish an ICA volunteer network for its community engagement efforts.

Over the years, I am happy to note that many amongst the audience I spoke to, especially the heartlanders and foreign workers, are responsive to our messages particularly the anti-harboursing message and take steps to safeguard themselves, e.g. verify with ICA the immigration

status of their prospective foreign tenant before subletting their houses / flats / rooms to them.

Safety and security is every Singaporean’s responsibility. Together with the other ICA Ambassadors, we are happy to be a digit contributing to it.



**Mr Lionel Jerome De Souza -
ICA Crime Prevention Ambassador**
8 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

The paramount factor that drives and motivates me to serve as an ICA Ambassador is when I see the annual statistics of immigration offences decreasing. This gives me a sense of satisfaction to know that people who had attended ICA’s talks and exhibitions had put into practice the key messages shared, e.g. procedures for change of address in their NRICs, conducting due diligence checks when renting out their houses / flats / rooms to foreigners, and not succumbing to

the temptation to purchase prohibited or controlled items whilst on holiday abroad.

As an ICA Ambassador, the thought of any expectation of rewards should be farthest from the mind. You come to serve because you want to make a difference, to be of service to Singapore and its people in making the nation a safe and secure place for everyone.



**Ms Au Yeung Shiu Lan, Shirley -
ICA Crime Prevention Ambassador**
8 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

Being an ambassador of ICA, I worked closely with ICA to organise talks, exhibitions and outreach events such as Emergency Preparedness Days to disseminate ICA’s messages islandwide. I am so proud to be an ICA Ambassador, playing a significant role as the vital link between ICA and the community to create awareness on ICA’s role and functions and what the community can do to safeguard themselves and safeguard our homeland. Even though I am 58, I will continue to serve as an ICA Ambassador regardless of any illness

or heavy workload that I have. I can do it, so can you too! I hope more and more ambassadors can be recruited to work hand-in-hand with ICA. Together we make Singapore a safe and secure home to live in.

Our **Ambassadors**, Their **Stories**



Mr Ow Yong Tian Hock, Alex, PBM - ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador
4 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

As a link between ICA and the community in Queenstown Constituency to create awareness of ICA's messages on border security and identification, one of the many challenges that I initially faced was how to reach out to the community. A society with different age groups, interests and backgrounds means that we have to adopt approaches that are appropriate for effective engagement of each of these groups. Understanding this diversity, we have used different platforms such as exhibitions for the residents at heartlands and talks for senior citizens at community centres

within Queenstown Constituency to effectively convey the various messages. I can say that through our efforts over the years, we have been successful in making the community more aware of the safety and security matters and hence safeguarding our nation.

Through my work as an ICA Ambassador, I have the opportunity to meet a lot of people, learn and gain a lot of knowledge to expand my thinking. All these make it so worthwhile to serve as an ICA Ambassador and keep me going.



Mrs Gopal Vivakaambal, PBM - ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador
6 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

Building strong bonds and close ties with the residents drive me to continue to serve as an ICA Ambassador.

We organise talks at Queenstown Community Centre for the residents especially the elderly to share information and various messages with them. Some of the messages shared include due diligence checks required of homeowners before subletting their houses / flats / rooms to foreigners, change of address on NRIC, prohibited or controlled items that are not allowed to be brought back to Singapore, etc. Through these sessions, the residents get to learn and understand more about the various messages that are useful

to them. They are appreciative of our efforts to keep them up to date of the current requirements and procedures of ICA.

Volunteering as an ICA Ambassador is an honour and my pleasure to serve the community and contribute my efforts to the best that I can do. I would like to take this opportunity to share that as an ICA Ambassador, I appreciate ICA for providing up-to-date information on the current requirements and procedures of ICA. I would also like to share an advice with my fellow ambassadors, i.e. to "know the facts and information well so that you can always provide accurate information to members of the public."



Ms Chan Yong Hoon, Sabrina, PBM - ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador
4 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

Joining ICA as an ambassador allows me to play a part in keeping our borders safe and secure. We are on the ground to educate our fellow friends and neighbours, for instance, the due diligence checks required of homeowners before subletting their houses / flats / rooms to foreigners and ensuring that they are here legally.

The rewards I have received as an ICA Ambassador are intangible, i.e. getting to know like-minded ambassadors and knowing that we

can support one another. All of us have a common purpose. We love Singapore and want a country that is safe and secure.

Some words of encouragement for my fellow ambassadors - "Press on, fellow ambassadors... We may be a small group, but we are very relevant. A little ripple causes ever expanding ripples. Together, Singapore *boleh!*"

Our **Ambassadors**, Their **Stories**



**Mr Tan Kok Siong, Michael, PBM -
ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador**
3 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

I feel privileged to have been invited by ICA in 2011 to be an ICA Ambassador. Over the years, I have come to understand and learn more about its operations and work functions through the visits to the various commands such as Ports Command and Airport Command.

As the Chairman of ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassadors (GLAs) of Ngee Soon Constituency, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow ICA Ambassadors for their services.

It is indeed an honour to serve our community, and I urge all of us to continuously reflect upon our roles and never take them for granted. Most of all, we should serve our community to the best of our ability and with utmost dedication.



**Ms N Kumari Devi, PBM -
ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador**
3 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

As an ICA Ambassador, I am equipped with the skills and knowledge required of me to ensure a safer family and more secure Singapore which is my home.

With the constant change in technology, I need to continuously upgrade myself, be resilient and overcome any new and future challenges.

There was once an elderly resident who approached me for assistance to check on the validity of her tenant's work permit after attending one of

our outreach events. She had rented one of her rooms to a foreigner and was living alone then. Subsequently, I assisted her to check with the Ministry of Manpower's Interactive Voice Response System and website. She felt safer and more secured after the verification.

It is indeed an enriching and exciting experience being an ICA Ambassador.



**Ms T Porchelvi -
ICA Grassroots Leader Ambassador**
3 years of service (as at 31 Dec 2014)

My passion to serve the community and residents motivates me to join as an ICA Ambassador in contributing and serving more. It is not an easy task to educate the community and residents on ICA's key messages. As many of the residents rent their premises to foreigners, it is our commitment to highlight the key message on due diligence checks required of homeowners before subletting their houses / flats / rooms to foreigners to them. Hence, we would have to educate them through block parties, festive celebrations

and chit-chat sessions to bring the various messages across so that they can understand more about ICA. I feel very pleased whenever residents appreciate what we have disseminated to them regarding ICA's messages and guidelines.

Distinguished Visitors



21 January 2014

The Ministry of Home Affairs hosted an 8-member delegation led by Director-General Rotem Peleg, Israel Ministry of Public Security from 19-23 January 2014. The delegation was interested to learn about Singapore's border security capabilities and how ICA dealt with unconventional terrorist threats. As part of the visit programme, ICA hosted the delegation at Woodlands Command on 21 January 2014. The delegation was briefed on the overview of operations at Woodlands Command, clearance framework and the various systems and technologies used in the clearance of people, goods and conveyances. They were also brought on a site tour of Woodlands Command, where they were briefed on the Integrated Cargo Inspection System, Flexi-Bus Hall, Sentinel II Puffer Portal and Analytical Laboratories.



3 June 2014

Brigadier Abdullah Salem Al Ali, Director-General of the General Directorate of Border Passports and Expatriates Affairs, and Colonel Jamal Mohammed Al Kaabi, Director of the Criminal Search Department, Qatar, were invited by the Ministry of Home Affairs to attend the World Cities Summit Forum held from 1-3 June 2014. On 3 June 2014, the delegation paid a courtesy call on Commissioner, ICA at ICA headquarters and was brought on a site tour of the Identity Authentication & Document Analysis laboratory, eLobby, iCollect and Heritage Gallery.



9 September 2014

ICA hosted a delegation of African policymakers led by President Obasanjo Olusegun, a former President of Nigeria at Ports Command on 9 September 2014. The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies assisted with organising this study tour for the delegation. Director Operations hosted the 18-member delegation at Ports Command where they were briefed on an overview of Ports Command's operations and clearance of sea cargo and later brought on a site tour of the Integrated Cargo Inspection System.

Distinguished Visitors

30 October 2014

ICA hosted a 5-member delegation led by Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (R) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi Bin Haji Mohd Yussof, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Brunei Darussalam at Tuas Command on 30 October 2014. Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (R) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi Bin Haji Mohd Yussof was part of the delegation that accompanied Honourable Pehin Datu Singamanteri Colonel (R) Dato Seri Setia (Dr) Awang Haji Mohammad Yasmin Bin Haji Umar, Brunei Minister of Energy, on a working visit to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The delegation requested to visit Tuas Command to learn more about ICA's land checkpoint operations and the deployment of Hazmat Transport Vehicle Tracking System by Singapore Civil Defence Force. During the site tour, they were briefed on the enhanced Immigration Automated Clearance System and the use of the Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System for radiographic scanning of cargo vehicles.



26-27 November 2014

ICA hosted a 4-member delegation led by Director-General (DG) Sok Phal, Cambodia General Department of Immigration, to visit ICA to learn more about our experience in organising the 15th Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs which was held in Singapore in 2011. On 26 November 2014, Commissioner, ICA hosted DG Sok Phal and his delegation to a courtesy call, which was followed by a site tour to the Heritage Gallery and eLobby to learn about ICA's heritage and e-services respectively. On 27 November 2014, the delegation visited Woodlands Command to learn about ICA's land checkpoint operations.



2 December 2014

ICA hosted a 3-member delegation led by Mr Gil Kerlikowske, Commissioner, the United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Protection at Tuas Command on 2 December 2014. The U.S. delegation was involved in the signing of the Joint Statement on Trusted Traveller Programme with ICA held at the Senior Police Officers' Mess on 1 December 2014. The delegation was briefed on the overview of ICA's checkpoint operations and was brought on a site tour of Tuas Command, where they were briefed on the enhanced Immigration Automated Clearance System at the Arrival Bus Hall, followed by a visit to the Analytical Laboratory and Decontamination Centre of the Protective and Analytical Facility.



Distinguished Visitors



16-18 December 2014

ICA hosted a 5-member delegation led by Deputy Under Secretary, Dr Robert Griffin from the United States (U.S.) Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Science & Technology (S&T), from 16-18 December 2014. The delegation was in Singapore on invitation by the Office of the Chief Science & Technology Officer, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The U.S. (DHS S&T) is one of MHA's key strategic partners in S&T collaborations. The visit to ICA provided the delegation with an overview of MHA's capabilities in harnessing S&T in the various domains of Home Team operations, with a focus on our border security. Commissioner, ICA hosted Dr Griffin to a courtesy call at ICA headquarters on 17 December 2014.



23-24 December 2014

ICA hosted a 5-member delegation led by Director-General (DG) Zheng Baigang, Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration, People's Republic of China. The visit to ICA allowed the delegation to learn ICA's best practices. Commissioner, ICA hosted DG Zheng to a courtesy call at ICA headquarters (HQ) on 23 December 2014. The delegation was subsequently briefed on ICA's passport forgery detection capabilities, heritage and e-services during site tours to Identity Authentication & Document Analysis laboratory, Heritage Gallery and eLobby at ICA HQ respectively. The delegation also visited Tuas Command on 23 December 2014 to view their operations and facilities, followed by a visit to ICA Training School on 24 December 2014 to learn about the training programmes specially designed for ICA officers.

Highlights



1) Live Facial Matching for Passport Transactions

With the introduction of iCollect on 1 April 2013, ICA has moved towards greater use of facial recognition and matching technology. From 24 November 2014, live facial matching has been incorporated as part of biometrics verification of an applicant's identity during application and collection of passport. Once the applicant is at the counter for application or collection, live facial capturing and verification is automatically initiated. This is an added feature on top of face-to-face verification and fingerprint matching. The capability to perform a non-intrusive live facial capture and matching at service touch points complements the visual face-to-face checks conducted by counter officers. This greatly enhances the authentication process to ensure that the person present for collection of the passport is the rightful holder of the passport.



2) Collection of Long-Term Pass Cards via iCollect

With effect from 1 April 2014, selected categories of successful Long-Term Pass (LTP) applicants are now able to collect their LTP cards at the iCollect machine located at the eLobby at ICA Building. LTP applicants will be able to collect their LTP cards via iCollect after their identities have been verified via biometric technology. It gives LTP applicants another option of collecting their LTP cards in a convenient, expeditious and secure manner at ICA.



3) Implementation of New Queue System at ICA Building

The Permanent Resident Services Centre led a project team comprising officers from the Citizen Services Centre, Visitor Services Centre and Technology Division to successfully implement a new queue system, known as NQS, at the three services centres. Launched on 26 May 2014 to better manage the queues at the services centres, the NQS is a total revamp of the previous electronic Queue Management System which was developed and deployed as stand-alone applications at each services centre.

The NQS operates on a centralised database with built-in intelligence to carry out load levelling for efficient and dynamic queue management. The system merges information from real-time queue situations, the customers' appointment for the respective counter services, and historical queue data. It allows the services centres to better anticipate and manage their counter operations dynamically, especially during peak periods. For instance, when the queue load at a particular counter service area is high, the system will alert supervisors and identify suitable service counters that are underutilised. The crowd can then be re-directed, thereby distributing the queue load.

The NQS also allows the services centres to implement a single queue ticket for multiple services. Customers no longer need to re-queue and obtain a new queue ticket if they are obtaining a different service from the same services centre, or from another services centre. Hence, they enjoy the convenience of a seamless transfer of queue information from one counter to the next, thus shortening their overall waiting time. With enhanced 'queue logic', the services centres can better identify the waiting public and accord them with the predetermined priority. The system also has an 'offline' module to allow the services centres to continue their counter operations with minimal disruptions in the event of a system downtime.

The NQS' innovative design paves the way for the services centres to provide common-counter services and one-stop service within each services centre and eventually across all three services centres. This will also steer ICA towards the strategic direction of achieving a one-stop integrated services centre. For its innovation, ICA clinched the Gold Award in the MHA 3i Award 2014 under the Home Team Process / Policy Innovation of the Year Award. The NQS also won the Most Innovative Project / Policy (Nominee) Award at the PS21 ExCEL Convention 2014.

Highlights



4) Best Trainee Award

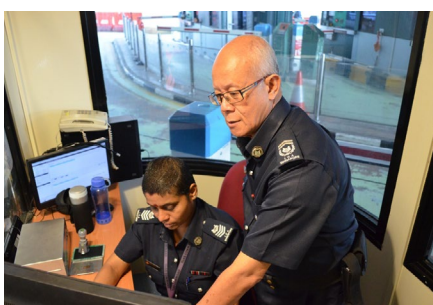
The Basic Induction Course is one of the key training programmes that is mandatory for all newly recruited ICA officers. This course equips new entrants with the necessary knowledge and skills in ICA's core competencies to perform their roles effectively as guardians of Singapore's borders. It also plays a pivotal role in developing new officers in the areas of soft skills and character development.

Given the importance of the Basic Induction Course, Training School has introduced the Best Trainee Award with effect from June 2014 to give recognition to the best trainee who has achieved outstanding results in the ICA's core competencies areas and displayed commendable attitude during his/her training. Recipients of the Best Trainee Award are presented with a personalised plaque that has the officer's name inscribed on it. As the Best Trainee Award winner serves as an exemplary role model to fellow batch mates, the officer is also appointed as the valedictorian for the batch of trainees during the graduation ceremony.



5) Be S.M.A.R.T @ ICA

In order to strengthen the mental well-being of our officers to cope with rising workload and increased complexity of operations, ICA worked with the Police Psychological Services Division to prepare an easy to read guide to provide valuable tips on building mental resilience and personal mastery. The guide is known as "Be S.M.A.R.T @ ICA", which stands for Stress Management (S), Money Management (M), Anger Mastery (A), Relationships (R) and Time Management (T). Besides distributing the guides to all ICA officers, a series of communication messages and briefing sessions on the five core life skills of S.M.A.R.T were communicated to all officers between March to June 2014 to reinforce this knowledge. In addition, the S.M.A.R.T @ ICA life skills were also incorporated into the curriculum for the ICA Basic Induction Course.



6) Short-Term Contract Employment of ICA Officers after Age 65

As part of our continuous effort to tap on the experience of retired officers, ICA introduced a three-month contract for the employment of eligible retired ICA Specialists since July 2014. The three-month contract is offered twice a year to coincide with the mid and end of the year travel peak periods, to eligible ICA Specialists who have earlier completed their re-employment at age 65 and below the age of 67 on the same terms, including the qualifying criteria, remuneration and benefits. This short-term contract provides a fair and competitive contract for the organisation to retain the services of its retired officers.

Highlights



7) Inaugural Bilateral Meeting with Brunei

As part of our initiatives to enhance ties with countries that are of strategic importance, ICA initiated the first bilateral meeting with the Brunei Department of Immigration and National Registration from 2 to 4 April 2014. The purpose of the meeting was to allow officers from the two departments to interact and focus on areas of bilateral cooperation. The Bruneian delegation was led by its Acting Director, Mr Azmi Haji Hafneh. As this was the inaugural meeting, the delegation was provided with an overview of ICA's functions and a site tour of Airport Command. The meeting had allowed the two departments to further strengthen the close working ties and established formal networks for sharing and exchange of information.



8) Border Health Control Measures during the Outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease

The outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa started in March 2014. In the wake of the World Health Organisation declaring the EVD epidemic an international health emergency, ICA worked with the Ministry of Health to implement border health measures to safeguard against the importation of EVD through Singapore's checkpoints. These measures include the deployment of health advisory posters and distribution of Health Advisory Notice cards at air, land and sea checkpoints. Additional screening measures against EVD include temperature screening at air checkpoints and the issuing of questionnaires / Health Declaration Cards at air, land and sea checkpoints to targeted travellers to detect exposure to EVD.

ICA also worked with Ministry of Foreign Affairs to implement arrival visa requirements for nationals from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone with effect from 5th November 2014. The visa requirement will allow for better oversight of the entry of nationals from these countries and facilitate possible contact tracing.



9) Exercise Hercules II

In 2014, ICA's Operations Planning Branch and Ministry of Home Affairs Crisis Preparedness Directorate jointly conducted Exercise Hercules II. It is a National Emergency (NE) exercise that aims to validate the operational readiness of ICA in its management of checkpoints, immigration and registration functions prior to and during a NE. Since the first edition of Exercise Hercules, much has changed in our operating landscape. It was thus timely that Exercise Hercules II was conducted.



The exercise involved active participation of personnel from ICA, Ministry of Home Affairs' Headquarters as well as other Home Team departments and Home Front agencies including the Singapore Police Force, Singapore Prison Service and the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). Exercise Hercules II consisted of two components, the Table-Top Exercise that was held on 10 September 2014 and the Command Post Exercise that was conducted from 17 to 18 November 2014. A total of over 210 personnel from ICA, the Home Team, SAF and other agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Communications and Information were involved in the exercise.

The exercise was an important platform for the Home Team, SAF and other agencies to surface strategic and tactical issues for deliberations. This exercise also served as an opportunity for ICA to reaffirm the relationships and networks with the various agencies involved and to ensure operational readiness at all times.

Highlights

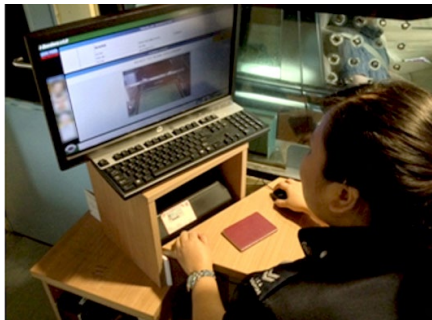


10) Joint Operations on Little India Riot

In early December 2013, a riot perpetrated by foreigners broke out in the vicinity of Little India. As part of the enforcement action, the repatriation operation was planned to be executed, within a short period of time, for a total of 57 work permit holders, who were given Police warnings and had their work permits cancelled. ICA Repatriation Branch worked closely with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore Police Force, Singapore Prison Service and Ministry of Manpower to repatriate this group of individuals. As these workers were from different companies, Repatriation Branch worked efficiently with multiple employers to retrieve their travel documents and belongings. Repatriation papers were served to the workers and air tickets were secured to send them back to their countries.

In addition, a total of 25 foreigners were arrested and charged in Court for their active participation in the riots. Four of the 25 foreigners charged managed to secure bail. Their continued stay in Singapore on Special Passes, while awaiting prosecutorial action, was managed and closely monitored by ICA Repatriation Branch. As of 25 December 2014, ICA Repatriation Branch had arranged for 14 of the 25 foreigners who had completed serving their sentences, to be repatriated. Repatriation operations for the rest of the foreigners charged in Court is still underway and necessary arrangement will be made upon their release from Prisons.

For displaying professionalism, commitment and resilience in dealing with the workers involved in the Little India Riot, Enforcement Division was awarded the Commissioner's Commendation (Group) in May 2014.



11) Integrated Border System

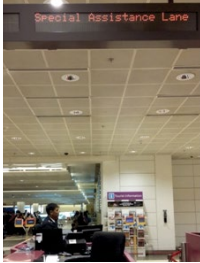
The global security landscape has changed since the 9/11 incident in 2001. The need to uphold border security has increasingly become more critical and important globally. As the guardian of Singapore's borders, secure and efficient clearance of people, goods and conveyances at our checkpoints is of utmost importance to ICA. This becomes increasingly challenging as the number of travellers crossing our borders increases over the years. Hence, there is an impetus for ICA to improve on its capabilities and to stay ahead of these challenges. Integrated Border System (i-Borders) was developed to replace ICA's existing clearance system and meet the objectives of performing traveller-centric clearance as well as providing a holistic view on traveller-conveyance clearance. i-Borders, implemented in 2014, will also support risk assessment and interface with other existing ICA's systems to deliver a seamless channel for the clearance of people, goods and conveyances upon arrival and departure from Singapore.



12) Mutual Arrangement for Automated Immigration Services Between Singapore and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

To provide greater convenience for Singapore citizens travelling overseas, the mutual arrangement for automated immigration services between Singapore and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) was implemented on 22 September 2014. Under the mutual arrangement, eligible holders of Singapore passports will be able to enrol for the e-Channel services in the HKSAR and eligible holders of HKSAR passports will be able to enrol for the enhanced Immigration Automated Clearance System services in Singapore. With this, eligible Singapore citizens can now enjoy the convenience of the automated immigration clearance facilities in HKSAR, while eligible holders of HKSAR passports also enjoy similar facilities in Singapore.

Highlights



13) Special Assistance Lane for Immigration Clearance at Singapore Changi Airport, Terminal 1

In October 2014, Airport Command introduced the Special Assistance Lane at Terminal 1. The Special Assistance Lane facilitates the clearance of elderly, pregnant women and families with young children. This brings much convenience for these groups of people as they need not wait in long queues, especially during holiday seasons. This form of facilitation can only be found in a few major airports in the world.

This initiative was jointly implemented by Airport Command and Changi Airport Group to deliver a world-class experience at Singapore Changi Airport.



14) Revamp of the Airport Logistics Park of Singapore Checkpoint

Previously at Airport Logistics Park of Singapore (ALPS) Checkpoint, ICA officers at the primary clearance booths (PCBs) would send targeted consignments for further checks at the secondary checking bays. Owing to the limitations of the tunnel size of the X-ray machines at the bays, targeted consignments of dimensions larger than the tunnel size would have to be subjected to physical inspections instead. Such manual examinations requiring packing and unpacking not only involved a lot of time and effort by ICA officers and the traders, it invariably prolonged the clearance time and resulted in congestion and a backflow of vehicles at the checkpoint during the peak periods.



To improve on the clearance system, Air Cargo Command revamped and expanded the ALPS Checkpoint. Three new PCBs were constructed to replace the older booths. A Radiographic Scanning Portal (RSP) was installed before the new PCBs.

On 14 March 2014, the RSP was fully operationalised. All imported goods clearing through ALPS Checkpoint are now subject to 100% non-intrusive radiographic scanning before arriving at the new PCBs for security and customs clearance. The image analyst at the PCBs can now pinpoint the exact location of any suspicious cargo within the vehicle compartment and refer the cargo for secondary checks.

The Import Office located next to the secondary inspection area is also installed with image analysis workstations. These are linked to all the other workstations in the PCBs. This would mean that when a target vehicle reaches the secondary inspection area, the duty officer would already have been alerted by the image analysis workstations with information of the suspicious consignment and compartment of the vehicle to subject to thorough examination with other scanning devices like explosive and radiation detectors. The vehicle may also be opened up and the cargo unloaded for physical checks. If no anomalies are detected after the checks, the permits will then be cleared at the Import Office and the conveyance released. Further investigations will be conducted for any contraband detected.

The new process now allows for non-intrusive security screening of cargo and vehicles to be completed within a shorter time and thus the efficiency and effectiveness of the checkpoint is enhanced.

Highlights



15) Joint Emergency Exercise at Woodlands Train Checkpoint - Project Rail Safe

On 17 January 2014, Woodlands Command hosted and jointly conducted an emergency exercise codenamed “Project Rail Safe” at Woodlands Train Checkpoint. The exercise was initiated by the Home Team Western Sector agencies to enhance officers’ operational readiness and emergency response during crisis situations. Agencies involved in the exercise included ICA Woodlands Command, Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) 4th Division and the Singapore Police Force (SPF) “J” Division.



The exercise simulated an attack while travellers were undergoing arrival immigration clearance at the Train Checkpoint. The exercise showcased ICA officers working closely with SCDF and SPF officers in facilitating rescue and fire-fighting efforts as well as evacuating travellers out of the Train Checkpoint. Representatives from the Malaysian Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) agencies also participated in the exercise. The exercise gave an opportunity for all participants to familiarise themselves with the evacuation route at the Train Checkpoint. The exercise also demonstrated the close coordination between all the participating agencies.

A total of 80 Home Team personnel and 11 emergency and supporting vehicles were involved in the exercise. Operations at the Train Checkpoint were not affected during the exercise as the exercise was conducted after the last departing train for the day had left the Train Checkpoint.



16) Exercise Yellowstorm

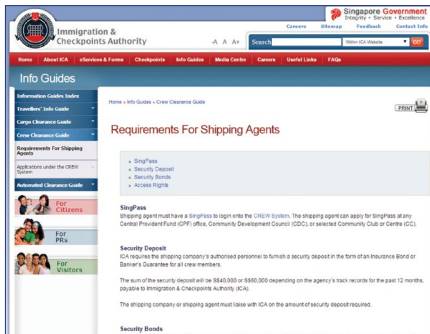
ICA Tuas Command conducted a joint exercise codenamed “Exercise Yellowstorm” with Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) 4th Division and Singapore Police Force (SPF) “J” Division on 4 December 2014 at Arrival Cargo Zone 5 in Tuas Checkpoint.

Exercise Yellowstorm is a SCDF divisional level consequence management exercise for High Risk Installations (HRI). The HRI exercise was targeted at validating the readiness to respond and the coordination between the checkpoint agencies (ICA & SPF) and SCDF in response to a civil emergency incident involving toxic industrial chemical (TIC) spillage. The exercise showcased ICA Secondary Team officers being equipped with the Powered Air Purifying Respirator and using handheld detectors like the AP4C chemical detector and identiFINDER radiation detector to conduct the initial assessment of situation of the incident area. It was also an opportunity for the officers to familiarise themselves with the evacuation route.

The exercise demonstrated the communication between the ICA / SPF Operations Room during the reporting of incident, the activation and coordination of SCDF emergency response to the incident site and the efficiency of SCDF in containing the TIC, conducting rescue and decontamination of casualties.

Although it was a major exercise, members of the public, checkpoint traffic and operations were not affected. The successful exercise illustrated the close cooperation between the various agencies which work together under the Home Team.

Highlights



17) Crew Clearance Guide

Unlike the availability of some information guides on the ICA internet website, there was no similar guide on crew clearance matters for the shipping companies to access as and when required. Members of the public, in particular shipping agents, often contacted ICA's Coastal Command for advice pertaining to the submission of crew-related immigration applications.

Moreover, while the Immigration Act (Cap 133) statutes are readily available on the internet, they do not explicitly state how they are actualised in ICA's daily operations for crew and related issues. The shipping agents,

especially those who are not familiar with the language used in the Act, often have difficulty understanding the information and complying with the requirements.

Recognising the concerns faced by the shipping agents and as part of the Command's continual efforts to enhance its service to the shipping community, Coastal Command has since developed a crew clearance guide and uploaded it onto the ICA website.

The crew clearance guide comprises two parts. Part I details the requirements that shipping agents have to fulfil before they can submit crew-related immigration applications or transact via the Computerised REcords of creW (CREW) system. Part II provides information on the applications available within the CREW system. The information in Part II is categorised in such a way that it dovetails with the actual sequence in the submission in the CREW system. Starting from the arrival application of crew members on board the vessel, it also covers the sign-on, sign-off and transfer of crew, extension of landing pass for crew while the vessel is in port, to the subsequent departure of the crew on board the vessel.

Winning the Gold Award for the ICA's Best Knowledge Management Competition 2013, the Crew Clearance Guide was successfully published on the ICA website in October 2014. Moving forward, the Command will update the guide to correspond with any changes in crew-related immigration requirements and procedures as and when required.



18) Protective Analytical and Assessment Facility at Pasir Panjang Scanning Station

The detection and analytical capabilities at the Tuas Protective Analytical Facility and Woodlands Analytical Laboratories have played a critical role in the monitoring, detection and identification of Security Sensitive Materials (SSMs) and threats at our borders. This has helped to ensure that SSMs are stopped at our checkpoints to prevent their abuse as weapons of mass destruction inland. With nuclear power becoming a reality in our region in the coming years, there is a need for us to enhance our analytical capabilities at our ports to detect and handle nuclear materials and waste which could otherwise be smuggled into Singapore for nuclear terrorism purposes.

With this in mind, the Protective Analytical and Assessment Facility (PAAF) at Ports Command's Pasir Panjang Scanning Station was conceptualised and built. The fruition of the PAAF has pushed ICA to greater heights in detecting chemical, biological, radiological and explosive (CBRE) materials. The facility boasts state-of-the-art scientific equipment and systems, for the detection of nuclear (fissile, fissionable and spent fuel) materials. Pitted against a backdrop of heightened threats from the smuggling of nuclear materials / waste to perpetuate nuclear terrorism, the PAAF can analyse CBRE samples in an accelerated and rapid manner. With the existing systems, the PAAF further contributes to Ports Command's robust checks of sea cargo, without impeding trade movement.

The PAAF began partial operations on 2 December 2013. Training of the officers will be done in phases, with full operationalisation of PAAF to be achieved by end of 4th quarter 2015.

Highlights



19) Replacement of Radiographic Scanning Portal at Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station

To maintain the delicate balance of ensuring security whilst providing quality service, Ports Command has continually sought new and innovative technological solutions that serve the Command's unrelenting pursuit in security clearance and trade facilitation.



One ostensible example is the implementation of the new Integrated Cargo Inspection System (ICIS) that was commissioned on 14 December 2013 to replace the Re-locatable Vehicle & Cargo Inspection System (RV) at Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station (TPSS). Under the RV, cargo drivers were required to stop and alight from their container trucks, as part of the safety measures, while the RV carried out the scanning of the containers. This was due to the lack of automatic cabin-avoidance feature during the scanning process. Hence, the scanning process had inevitably been prolonged and the performance throughput reduced, resulting in container queue backflows from time to time, to the port areas, particularly during the peak periods. The long process was further exacerbated by the inability of the RV to perform preliminary detection for possible presence of radioactive materials, ensuing in TPSS officers having to conduct screening on containers with the use of handheld detectors.

The implementation of ICIS has shortened the scanning duration by 50%. The shorter scanning process was the result of the new system having an automatic cabin avoidance feature which does not require the driver to alight from the truck during the scanning process. This has led to TPSS producing a higher scanning throughput. To further augment the scanning process, a complete road-resurfacing works to upgrade the entire scanning compound, was also undertaken during the same period.

Despite the ever increasing cargo volume but finite infrastructure, Ports Command strives to continually provide a security-focused, service-conscious approach in service delivery. The deployment of ICIS fully exemplifies the command's constant review of work processes through technology leveraging and active collaborations with strategic partners.

Significant **Cases**



Tuas Command

9 January 2014 @ 0745hrs

Location

Tuas Checkpoint, Arrival Bus Concourse

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 160 packets of dried tobacco leaves and 500 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers detected dried tobacco leaves and duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in three jerry cans within a Malaysia-registered coach. The driver and attendant, both male Malaysians, were immediately placed under arrest and the vehicle seized.

Result

The two male Malaysians were each sentenced to four months' imprisonment.



Ports Command

10 January 2014 @ 0005 hrs

Location

Tanjong Pagar Scanning Station

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 14,999 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

Detected in a 40-foot container declared to contain 2,080 pieces of partition boards on 16 pallets by ICA scanning officers, who found the scanned images to be inconsistent with the goods declared in the import customs permit.

Result

Follow-up operation by Singapore Customs led to the arrest of four male Malaysians. The four Malaysians were each sentenced to between 34 to 36 months' imprisonment.



Significant **Cases**



Sri Lankan agent

Enforcement Division

January 2014

Location

Various locations

Offence

Abetment to overstay and arrangement of harbouring and illegal employment of immigration offenders

How

On 12 January 2014, two Sri Lankans (mother and son) surrendered to the authorities after realising they had overstayed and were cheated by a female Sri Lankan agent. Investigations conducted by ICA revealed that the son was given a fake Singapore Blue Identity card by a female Sri Lankan agent to seek employment in Singapore. The agent also arranged for the mother and son to reside in two separate Housing & Development Board units, located at Jurong West and Redhill respectively. The agent also arranged for them to work illegally as cleaners. With information provided by the mother and son, the agent as well as another female Sri Lankan overstay were arrested at the Redhill unit. Further investigation also revealed that the agent was herself an immigration offender who had used different identities to enter Singapore on a few occasions. Two harbourers at the Jurong West unit, one harbourer at the Redhill unit and one employer were also investigated for their offences.

Result

The agent was convicted for her own immigration-related offences as well as abetting the mother and son to overstay, harbouring and arrangement for illegal employment for them. She was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment and a fine of S\$6,000. As concurred by Attorney-General's Chambers, the mother and son were given stern warning for overstaying. The two harbourers at the Jurong West unit and the employer were given stern warning due to medical consideration. The harbourer at the Redhill unit was convicted and sentenced to a fine of S\$4,000. The overstay arrested together with the agent was also convicted and sentenced to 4 weeks' imprisonment and a fine of S\$1,500.



Air Cargo Command

2 March 2014 @ 2320 hrs

Location

Airmail Transit Centre

Offence

Attempted importation of 41 kilograms of illegal sex enhancement pills

How

Detected during X-ray screening of three parcels from Hong Kong declared as 'present'. Small bottles, containing 10 pills each, were found.

Result

Referred to Health Sciences Authority for further investigation.



Significant Cases



Woodlands Command

6 March 2014 @ 0950hrs

Location

Woodlands Checkpoint, Arrival Cargo Bay

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 43 live puppies

How

During an operation conducted by Woodlands Command, officers profiled and directed a Malaysia-registered lorry for further checks. The lorry, driven by a male Malaysian, was carrying a consignment of 22 pallets of assorted cooking oil. During the course of checks, officers discovered two sealed cardboard boxes placed behind the driver and passenger seats. 43 live puppies were found stacked inside the boxes.

Result

The male Malaysian was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.



Intelligence Division

10 April 2014 @ 0320 hrs

Location

Singapore territorial waters near Woodlands Waterfront Park

Offence

Attempted illegal entry

How

In a joint operation between ICA Intelligence Division and Police Coast Guard, a male Bangladeshi national was found swimming across the Straits of Johor, from beyond the International Boundary and entering Singapore territorial waters. He was subsequently arrested near Woodlands Waterfront Park.

Result

The male Bangladeshi national was sentenced to one month's imprisonment and four strokes of caning. He was repatriated to Bangladesh upon completion of his prison sentence.

Significant Cases



The MOC Arrangers



Enforcement Command

16 April 2014

Location

Various locations

Offence

Marriage of Convenience

How

A female Vietnamese and a male Singaporean were investigated for entering into a marriage of convenience (MOC). Investigations revealed that the MOC couple was brought together by two arrangers – another female Vietnamese who is also a Singapore Permanent Resident and a male Singaporean. The Vietnamese bride had paid the Vietnamese arranger a sum of S\$7,000. The Vietnamese arranger then approached the Singaporean arranger for the Singaporean groom to enter into a sham marriage with the Vietnamese bride.

Investigations also revealed that a false Singapore address was given in the visit pass application form by the Vietnamese bride when she applied for extension of her stay as well as in the Disembarkation / Embarkation (D/E) cards during the bride's entry in Singapore on four occasions.

Upon checking the Vietnamese arranger at her house, eight other Vietnamese were found residing there. Follow-up checks revealed that the Vietnamese arranger had also abetted all of them to make false declarations in the D/E cards with regards to their addresses in Singapore.

Result

The bogus MOC couple were both convicted and each sentenced to six months' imprisonment. The two MOC arrangers were both convicted and each sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. All the eight Vietnamese were dealt with accordingly and repatriated thereafter.



Coastal Command

2 May 2014 @ 0015 hrs

Location

Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Yacht Club

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 853 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers detected duty-unpaid cigarettes found wrapped in black plastic bags and covered with canvas sheets on a high-speed ferry berthed alongside the SAF Yacht Club jetty. All six male Indonesian crew members were arrested.

Result

The six male Indonesian crew members were each sentenced to between 10 weeks to seven months' imprisonment.



Significant Cases



Tuas Command

6 May 2014 @ 0520 hrs

Location

Tuas Checkpoint, Arrival Bus Concourse

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 356 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers detected duty-unpaid cigarettes hidden inside modified compartments built into the floorboard of two Malaysia-registered vans. The two male Malaysian drivers were immediately placed under arrest and their vehicles seized.

Result

The two male Malaysians were each sentenced to four months' imprisonment.



Coastal Command

21 May 2014 @ 0005 hrs

Location

Sea off Tanjung Penjuru

Offence

Illegal sales of 1,000 litres of diesel fuel from tugboat

How

During an operation conducted by Coastal Command Anti-Smuggling Team, two tugboats tied closely alongside each other in a secluded area of a designated mooring site were spotted. Checks uncovered equipment used for illegal sales of diesel fuel between the tugboat operators. The crew members and tugboats were arrested and seized respectively.

Result

11 Indonesian crew members were each sentenced to seven weeks' imprisonment.



Significant Cases



Air Cargo Command

3 July 2014 @ 1430 hrs and
4 July 2014 @ 1435 hrs

Location

Parcel Post Section

Offence

Attempted smuggling of three live lizards



How

On consecutive days, three live lizards were detected during X-ray screening on two postal articles originating from Malaysia. The first postal article was declared as 'cosmetics' and the other was not declared. ICA officers found the live lizards (two Leopard Geckos and an albino Leopard Gecko) in three plastic containers recovered from the two postal articles.

Result

A male Singaporean was fined \$300. The live exhibits were handed over to the Wildlife Reserves Singapore.



Woodlands Command

5 July 2014 @ 2230 hrs

Location

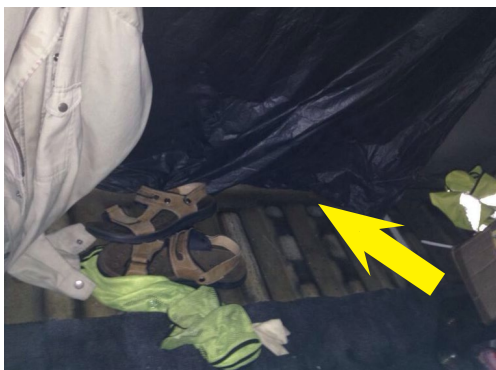
Woodlands Checkpoint, Departure Cargo Bay

Offence

Attempted illegal departure

How

During routine checks, officers found two male Bangladeshi nationals hiding under cushions and clothing at the empty space of the cabin behind the driver seat of a Malaysia-registered lorry. They were not in possession of any travel documents. The male Malaysian driver and the two Bangladeshi nationals were immediately placed under arrest.



Result

The two male Bangladeshi nationals were sentenced to one month's and eight weeks' imprisonment respectively for failure to present a passport to an immigration officer. The driver was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for abetting both Bangladeshi nationals to leave Singapore unlawfully.

Significant Cases



Air Cargo Command

8 July 2014 @ 0500 hrs

Location

Airmail Transit Centre

Offence

Attempted importation of two gun-shaped lighters

How

Detected during X-ray screening of two separate parcels from Hong Kong addressed to two different importers.

Result

Both parcel owners, a male Singaporean and a male Singapore Permanent Resident, were each given a stern warning by Singapore Police Force (SPF). The exhibits were disposed of by SPF.



Woodlands Command

15 August 2014 @ 0800 hrs

Location

Woodlands Checkpoint, Arrival Car Green Channel

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 298 cartons and 210 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers found duty-unpaid cigarettes hidden in various modified compartments of a Malaysia-registered car. Three Malaysians were arrested and the vehicle was seized.

The male Malaysian driver had recruited two female Malaysians, a mother and daughter, to act as 'passengers' as he assumed this would minimise suspicion and avoid detection by ICA officers.

Result

The male Malaysian was sentenced to seven months' imprisonment and the female Malaysian passengers were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment.



(Photo Source: Singapore Customs)

Significant **Cases**



Tuas Command

28 August 2014 @ 1810 hrs

Location

Tuas Checkpoint, Arrival Car Green Channel

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 80 cartons and 530 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers found duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in a modified dual Compressed Natural Gas tank of a Malaysia-registered car. The male Malaysian driver was immediately placed under arrest and the vehicle seized.

Result

The male Malaysian was sentenced to four months' imprisonment.



Woodlands Command

5 September 2014 @ 1215hrs

Location

Woodlands Checkpoint, Arrival Cargo Bay

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 14,519 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers found duty-unpaid cigarettes hidden amongst the consignment of 24 pallets (3,672 boxes) of potato chips in a Malaysia-registered lorry. The male Malaysian driver was immediately placed under arrest and the vehicle seized.

Result

Referred to Singapore Customs for further investigation.

Significant **Cases**



Tuas Command

8 October 2014 @ 1615 hrs

Location

Tuas Checkpoint, Arrival Cargo Bay

Offence

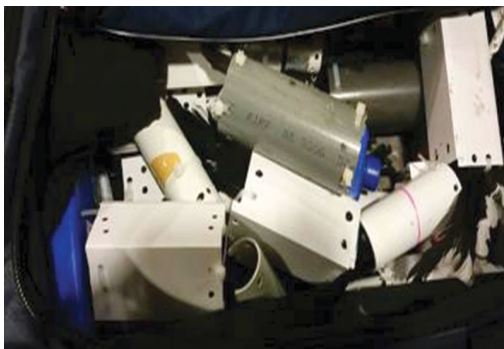
Attempted smuggling of 5,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes

How

During routine checks, officers detected unlabelled boxes placed between consignments declared as 'garments' and 'thermal paper' in a Malaysia-registered lorry. Duty-unpaid cigarettes were uncovered from these boxes. The male Malaysian driver was immediately placed under arrest and the vehicle seized.

Result

Referred to Singapore Customs for further investigation.



Airport Command

2 November 2014 @ 2310 hrs

Location

Changi Airport Terminal 3, Arrival Red/Green Channel

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 12 live birds

How

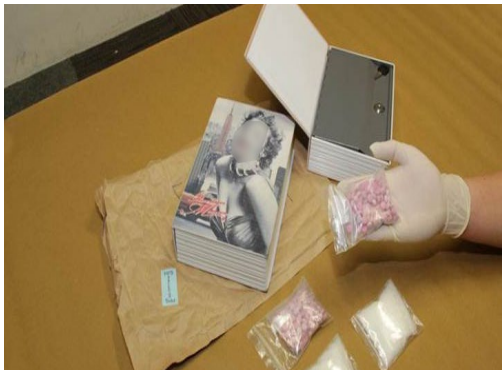
During screening of two checked-in baggage, the image analyst noticed tube-like images, which were consistent with containers used in the smuggling of birds. Physical checks uncovered nine Longtail, two Jambul and a Magpie from the bags. A male Singaporean was arrested.

Result

Referred to the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore for further investigation.



Significant Cases



Air Cargo Command

4 December 2014 @ 1455 hrs

Location

Parcel Post Section

Offence

Attempted smuggling of 103 grams of Ketamine and 299 'Ecstasy' tablets

How

Detected during X-ray screening of a parcel declared as 'book'. Upon further checks, the book was found to be a disguised locked safe-box.

Result

In a follow-up operation, Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) officers raided a unit in Marsiling Drive. 37 grams of 'ICE', a small amount of Ketamine, 120 Erimin-5 tablets and various capsules and tablets suspected to contain controlled drugs were recovered by CNB officers. A safe-box disguised as a book, similar to the one found within the parcel detected at Parcel Post Section was also recovered from the unit. A male Singaporean was arrested. Investigation by CNB is ongoing.



(Photo Source: CNB)



Airport Command

11 December 2014 @ 0030 hrs

Location

Changi Airport Terminal 1, Arrival Red/Green Channel

Offence

Attempted importation of 3,520 Nitrazepam (sleeping tablets)

How

Detected during routine checks in the baggage of a male Bangladeshi national.

Result

Referred to the Health Sciences Authority for further investigation.



Significant **Cases**



Woodlands Command

18 December 2014 @ 1950hrs

Location

Woodlands Checkpoint, Arrival Car Green Channel

Offence

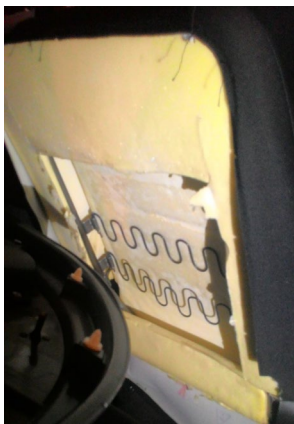
Attempted smuggling of about 5,900 grams of substances suspected to be controlled drug, Cannabis

How

During routine checks, officers detected two blocks of vegetable-like substances hidden in the front engine's air filter compartment of a Malaysia-registered car. The male Malaysian driver was immediately placed under arrest and Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) officers were notified of the findings. Further checks by CNB officers uncovered another four similar blocks from other parts of the car.

Result

Referred to CNB for further investigation.



(Photo Source: CNB)



(Photo Source: CNB)

Woodlands Command

31 December 2014 @ 0730hrs

Location

Woodlands Checkpoint, Arrival Car Green Channel

Offence

Attempted smuggling of about 9,270 grams of substances suspected to be controlled drug, Heroin

How

During routine checks, officers detected packets of brownish substances hidden under the rear passenger seat of a Malaysia-registered car, driven by a male Malaysian.

Result

In a follow-up operation, Central Narcotic Bureau (CNB) officers arrested another male Malaysian in the vicinity of Woodlands Town Garden, suspected to be an associate of the driver. Investigation by CNB is ongoing.

Annual Statistics

Checkpoint Operations		2014	2013	2012
Number of passengers cleared at the checkpoints	Arriving	99,123,100	101,516,800	97,915,800
	Departing	99,131,100	101,497,400	97,864,000
Number of inward containers cleared at the checkpoints		1,097,500	1,103,500	1,110,800
Number of inward consignments (non-containerised) cleared at the checkpoints		3,061,100	3,167,300	3,273,500
Number of parcels cleared at the Parcel Post Centre		3,646,600	2,987,800	2,602,700

Services Centre Operations		2014	2013	2012
Number of identity cards issued		65,200	66,200	68,700
Number of Singapore passports issued		642,500	646,100	624,600
Number of certificates of identity issued		480	510	520
Number of passes and permits (excluding re-entry permits) granted to foreigners		569,200	582,600	586,600
Number of live-births registered		42,200	39,800	42,600
Number of deaths registered		19,300	18,800	18,400

Annual Statistics

Enforcement Operations	2014	2013	2012
Number of illegal immigrants arrested	350	600	690
Number of overstayers arrested	1,690	1,930	1,890
Number of harbourers of immigration offender arrested	250	233	77
Number of employers of immigration offender arrested	69	97	41
Number of contraband cases detected	93,380	99,700	80,200

Acknowledgements

The Corporate Communications Division would like to thank all those who have helped in one way or another, to make the ICA Annual 2014 possible.

The Working Group

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Ms Nazeera Ebrahim
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Immigration & Checkpoints Authority

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