



**ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS 2018**



# ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT 2018

2017 1,176

1,071



Total immigration offenders arrested

53

2017



32

Persons convicted for marriage of convenience offences



107,771



90,327

2017

Contraband cases detected



340

Harbourers & employers of immigration offenders arrested

↑ 300

2017

## COMMISSIONER ICA'S QUOTE

“ In 2018, the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) cleared more than 212 million travellers, as well as 10 million consignments, containers and parcels.

Even with stringent checks and high penalties, attempts to smuggle contraband items into Singapore have persisted. The number detected at our checkpoints reached an all-time high in 2018. Some contraband items can pose a serious security threat to Singapore. This is why ICA officers cannot let up on security checks, even when the checkpoints are congested.

As the global security threat remains high, ICA must spare no effort to secure our borders, even as we facilitate the entry and exit of increasing volumes of travellers and cargo.

ICA will remain steadfast and vigilant in our mission. ”

- MARVIN SIM

# IMMIGRATION OFFENDER SITUATION

*Number of immigration offenders arrested continued to decline*

The total number of immigration offenders (IOs) arrested<sup>1</sup> last year decreased by about 8.9% to 1,071 in 2018, from 1,176 in 2017. Both the number of illegal immigrants (IIs) and overstayers (OS) arrested declined.

	2017	2018	
Illegal immigrants arrested	186	131	
Overstayers arrested	990	940	
Total immigration offenders arrested	1,176	1,071	8.9% ▼

ICA adopts a multi-pronged approach of tough laws, stringent border checks and inland enforcement to tackle the IO situation. A biometric identification system that scans all travellers' fingerprints has been implemented progressively across all checkpoints since 2016. IOs who attempt to re-enter Singapore with someone else's identity or a false identity can therefore be detected. This measure has denied and further deterred such persons from entering Singapore.

<sup>1</sup> The number of IOs arrested comprises both those who have been arrested inland and at the checkpoints.

ICA has also maintained its inland enforcement efforts to remove IOs from Singapore, and keep the IO situation under control. We conducted an average of more than 100 raids per month in 2017, and sustained this level of enforcement effort in 2018.



## CASE SPOTLIGHT



### Case #1 – Joint operations at sea<sup>2</sup>

In a joint operation with the Police Coast Guard (PCG) on 21 May 2018, two male Indonesian illegal immigrants were arrested at sea, south of Marina South Pier. The two men, aged 25 and 31, had attempted to row a sampan from Batam into Singapore. They were swiftly intercepted and arrested for unlawful entry into Singapore under the Immigration Act, Chapter 133.

The two men were each sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment and four strokes of the cane. The seized sampan was forfeited.



Wooden sampan used by the two men. (Photo: ICA)

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<sup>2</sup> ICA's full news release, "Two men arrested for unlawful entry into Singapore" was published on 22 May 2018.



The two men who were arrested and sentenced for unlawful entry into Singapore. (Photo: ICA)

### **Case #2 – Arrest of immigration offenders in industrial estate**

In a multi-agency enforcement blitz, four operations targeting suspected IOs were conducted respectively on 20 March, 19 July, 24 October and 30 November 2018. These IOs had been observed loitering in the vicinity of Yew Tee industrial estate, peddling contraband cigarettes.

The operations resulted in the arrest of 21 male Indonesian IOs and the seizure of more than 102 cartons and 4,561 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes. All 21 men received sentences ranging from one to three months' imprisonment and between three and six strokes of the cane, and will be repatriated after serving their sentence.



Makeshift shelter in the industrial estate. (Photo: ICA)



Men arrested in the enforcement blitz. (Photo: ICA)

# HARBOURING AND EMPLOYMENT OF IMMIGRATION OFFENDERS

*Number of harbourers and employers of immigration offenders increased*

The number of harbourers and employers (H/Es) of IOs arrested in 2018 increased by about 13% to 340 in 2018, from 300 in 2017. There was an increase in both the number of harbourers and employers arrested.

	2017	2018	
Harbourers of IOs arrested	252	282	
Employers of IOs arrested	48	58	
Total	300	340	13% ▲

The majority of the H/Es arrested were Singaporeans or Permanent Residents aged above 50. They had mostly failed to conduct the necessary checks on the foreigners' immigration statuses, in their bid to earn rental income. The IOs were mostly engaged in maintenance and construction work.

IOs who are undocumented present a security risk and may resort to crimes to sustain their livelihood. By denying them shelter and jobs, IOs will be deterred from entering or remaining in Singapore.

ICA will step up its community engagement efforts to remind Singaporeans to conduct due diligence checks on the status of foreigners to

whom they plan to rent their rooms, not to employ IOs, and to report to ICA or the Police if they come across IOs.

**Three mandatory checks when you rent your premises out:**

- (a) Check the tenant's original immigration/work pass;
- (b) Cross check the particulars on his/her pass against the particulars on his/her original passport; and
- (c) Verify the validity of his/her pass by checking with the issuing authority (i.e. Ministry of Manpower for work passes at [www.checkwpstatus.mom.gov.sg](http://www.checkwpstatus.mom.gov.sg) or download SGWorkPass mobile application, and ICA for other immigration passes such as Student's Pass and Long Term Visit Pass at [www.i enquiry.ica.gov.sg](http://www.i enquiry.ica.gov.sg)).



# CASE SPOTLIGHT



## Case #1 – Chinese nationals jailed for harbouring immigration offenders<sup>3</sup>

Two male Chinese nationals Xu Xiangjie and Song Weijia, aged 35 and 23 years old, were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment on 2 August 2018 for harbouring two immigration offenders. Another male Chinese national Ma Zhiwen, aged 32, who signed the tenancy agreement for the housing unit was also found culpable of providing shelter to the IOs. He was also sentenced to six months' imprisonment, on 14 September 2018.



(From left: Xu Xiangjie, Song Weijia and Ma Zhiwen)

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<sup>3</sup> ICA's full news release, "Three Male Chinese Nationals Jailed Six Months Each for Harbouring Immigration Offenders" was published on 19 Sep 2018.

# PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVES

*Working with the community to spread messages against harbouring and employment of IOs*

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Community partnership plays a critical role in supporting ICA to tackle the harbouring and employment of IOs. ICA engages community partners such as homeowners and estate agents to spread our anti-harbouring messages. We distribute collaterals containing these messages, such as the ICA Homeowner's Guide, to residents via Community Clubs and HDB branches as well as during community outreach events and exhibitions. Our ICA ambassadors also reach out directly to the community.



ICA Homeowners' Guide. (Photo: ICA)



An ICA officer reaching out to residents at Eunos Residents' Committee on anti-harboursing messages. (Photo: ICA)



An ICA officer (*Top*) and Ambassador (*Bottom, woman in blue*) engage members of the public on anti-harboursing messages. (Photo: ICA)

# CONTRABAND CASES DETECTED AT CHECKPOINTS

*Number of contraband cases detected at the checkpoints at its highest*

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The number of contraband cases detected at ICA's checkpoints increased by 19% from 90,327 in 2017 to 107,771 in 2018, the highest annual figure ever recorded. This works out to an average of about 300 cases per day in 2018. This was mainly due to an increase in contraband cases detected at the land checkpoints.

	2017	2018	
Total number of cases detected	90,327	107,771	19% ▲

In 2018, lorries and heavy commercial vehicles (e.g. bowsers, trailers) continued to be one of the most common conveyances for contraband items. This is of concern because the sheer size of such vehicles allows large quantities of contraband items or even security-sensitive materials such as toxic industrial chemicals and explosives to be concealed within the consignments or the modified compartments of these vehicles.

To address some of these challenges, ICA uses radiographic scanners to scan cargo vehicles, and implemented bus scanners at Tuas Checkpoint last year. These scanners are able to screen huge buses and cargo vehicles, allowing us to

identify secret compartments and contraband items more effectively and quickly.

Safeguarding our borders remains ICA's top priority. ICA will continue to do its utmost to stop attempts to smuggle undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives and other contraband items across our borders.



# INTERESTING CASES



*Involving the use of heavy commercial vehicles and lorries*

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## Case #1<sup>4</sup>

On 18 May 2018, ICA officers at Tuas Checkpoint detected anomalies in the scanned images of a consignment carried by a Malaysia-registered prime mover, and subjected the prime mover to more detailed checks. During the checks, ICA officers discovered 6,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed amongst a consignment of printer parts and roller scanners.



The Malaysia-registered prime mover used to smuggle the duty-unpaid cigarettes. (Photo: ICA)



6,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were uncovered.  
(Photo: ICA)

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<sup>4</sup> ICA's full news release, "6,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes seized at Tuas checkpoint" was published on 21 May 2018.

## Case #2

ICA officers at Woodlands Checkpoint noticed something suspicious in the scanned images of a Malaysia-registered lorry carrying empty plastic cases on 22 September 2018. Further checks uncovered 800 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed between the roof panels of the lorry.



Cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were concealed between the roof panels of the lorry. (Photo: ICA)



A total of 800 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were retrieved from the Malaysia-registered lorry. (Photo: ICA)

# ENFORCEMENT AGAINST MARRIAGES OF CONVENIENCE

*Number of persons convicted for MOC-related offences decreased*

In 2018, 32 persons were convicted for marriage of convenience (MOC)-related offences. This was a decrease of about 40% compared to 2017, during which 53 persons were convicted.

	2017	2018	
Persons convicted for MOC-related offences	53	32	40% ▼

ICA takes a serious view of foreigners engaging in MOCs with Singaporeans to obtain immigration facilities in Singapore. We will continue with our enforcement actions against such foreigners, and the middlemen who facilitate MOCs. We encourage members of the public to report any suspected case of MOC, as well as any other immigration-related offences, to ICA at 1800-391-6150 or via the ICA website ([www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg)). All information provided will be treated with the strictest confidence.



# CASE SPOTLIGHT



## **Man sentenced to six months' imprisonment for entering into a marriage of convenience**

On 14 December 2018, a 54-year-old Singaporean male Loh Chee Wai was convicted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment for entering into an MOC with a 39-year-old Chinese national, "Zheng". Investigations revealed that Loh was introduced to "Zheng" through a male Singaporean "Lim", who asked Loh if he was interested to marry a foreigner in return for a payment of \$6,000. Loh agreed as he was in financial difficulties.

At the arrangement of "Lim", the three of them met in July 2014. During the meeting, it was agreed that Loh would receive \$6,000 for his part in the MOC with "Zheng" to assist her to remain in Singapore to work. On 22 October 2014, Loh and "Zheng" solemnised their "marriage". After the solemnisation, Loh received \$3,000 from "Lim". The remaining \$3,000 was subsequently paid to him by "Zheng" in instalments. Separately, "Zheng" also paid Loh \$500 for sponsoring her long-term visit pass application.

On 30 May 2018, ICA officers arrested Loh for entering into a sham marriage with "Zheng".

Loh was convicted and sentenced in December 2018. “Lim” and “Zheng” have also been charged and their Court proceedings are ongoing.



Loh Chee Wai (Photo: ICA)

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