

# ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT 2017





***Our borders are our first line of defence in safeguarding Singapore's safety and security.***

***The Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) will remain vigilant and work closely with other enforcement agencies as well as leverage science and technology to enhance our checkpoint operations. With the Lunar New Year approaching, we expect an increase in the number of travellers and goods passing through our checkpoints. Despite stringent checks, smuggling attempts have not abated. As such, we urge the community to be alert and collaborate with us to keep Singapore safe and secure.***

*- Commissioner of ICA, Mr Clarence Yeo*



## **ICA ANNUAL STATISTICS REPORT 2017**



**1,278** ▼ **1,176** 2017

***Immigration offenders arrested***



**88,050** ▲ **90,327** 2017

***Contraband cases detected***



**43** ▲ **53** 2017

***Persons convicted for marriage of convenience offences***



**351** ▼ **300** 2017

***Harbourers & employers of immigration offenders arrested***

# IMMIGRATION OFFENDER SITUATION

*Number of immigration offenders continued to decline*

The total number of immigration offenders (IOs) arrested last year decreased by 8.0% to 1,176 in 2017, from 1,278 in 2016. Of these, the number of illegal immigrants arrested dropped by 14.3% to 186 in 2017, from 217 in 2016. The number of overstayers arrested decreased by 6.7% to 990 in 2017, from 1,061 in 2016.

ICA's multi-pronged approach to 'Deter, Deny and Detect' IOs through tough laws, stringent security checks at the checkpoints and enforcement operations has remained effective in keeping the IO situation under control. Close collaboration with other enforcement agencies, such as the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), is also key.

	2016	2017	
Illegal immigrants arrested	217	186	
Overstayers arrested	1,061	990	
Total immigration offenders arrested	1,278	1,176	8% ▼



# CASE SPOTLIGHT



## Joint operation at industrial estate<sup>1</sup>

In a joint operation with SPF and Singapore Customs at Yew Tee Industrial Estate on 4 May 2017, 12 Indonesian men, aged between 18 and 41, were arrested for immigration offences and peddling of duty-unpaid cigarettes.



Immigration offenders arrested during joint enforcement operation. (Photo: ICA)



Duty-unpaid cigarettes seized in the operation. (Photo: ICA)

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<sup>1</sup> The news release “Immigration offenders arrested in a joint operation” was published on 5 May 2017 on [www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg).

# OVERVIEW OF HARBOURING AND EMPLOYMENT OF IOs

*Number of harbourers and employers of IOs decreased*

The total number of harbourers and employers of IOs arrested in 2017 decreased by 14.5% to 300 in 2017, from 351 in 2016. The number of harbourers arrested declined by 17.6% to 252 in 2017, from 306 in 2016. The number of employers arrested increased slightly by 6.7% to 48 in 2017, from 45 in 2016.

ICA continued to take a tough stance against harbourers and employers of IOs. Without shelter and jobs in Singapore, IOs will not be incentivised to come here. While ICA takes the lead in the investigation and administration of all immigration-related offences, we work closely with other Government agencies to crack down on such offenders. We will also intensify our community engagement efforts to remind homeowners and employers to conduct due diligence checks on the legal status of foreigners before offering them shelter or employment.

	2016	2017	
Harbourers of IOs arrested	306	252	
Employers of IOs arrested	45	48	
Total	351	300	14.5% ▼

# 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's mission to keep the harbouring and employment of IOs in check. ICA actively engages our community partners such as homeowners and estate agents to spread anti-harbouring messages. ICA also works closely with our ICA ambassadors who devote their time to reach out to the community.



ICA Ambassadors (in blue shirts) sharing with foreign workers on the need to be in possession of valid immigration and work passes. (Photo: ICA)

To effectively reach out to the community, collaterals such as the Homeowners' Guide are distributed at talks, exhibitions, Community Clubs, HDB branches and Neighbourhood Police Posts. Homeowners are also educated on the importance of conducting due diligence checks on the legal status of prospective foreign tenants before renting out their premises. Such public

education reinforces the message that the safety and security of our community is a collective responsibility.



ICA Homeowners' Guide. (Photo: ICA)



An ICA officer sharing anti-harboring messages with estate agents. (Photo: ICA)

# CONTRABAND SMUGGLING SITUATION

*Number of case detections at the checkpoints increased*

The number of contraband smuggling cases detected at the checkpoints increased slightly by 2.6% to 90,327 in 2017, from 88,050 in 2016. Despite stringent checks, an average of 247 cases of smuggling attempts continue to be detected at our checkpoints daily.

In light of the current security climate, security at our checkpoints is ICA's top priority. ICA will continue to devote as much resources as needed to thwart attempts to smuggle undesirable persons, drugs, weapons, explosives or other contraband items through our borders.

	2016	2017	
Total number of cases detected	88,050	90,327	2.6% 



## TREND OF CONCERN



Heavy commercial vehicles continue to be used for smuggling contraband items in 2017. The sheer size of such vehicles means that large quantities of contraband items or even dangerous materials such as toxic industrial chemicals can be concealed within the consignments or modified compartments of these vehicles. ICA officers remain vigilant in their checks of such vehicles to ensure Singapore's safety and security.



# CASE SPOTLIGHT



## *Heavy commercial vehicles used in smuggling contraband*

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### **Case #1<sup>2</sup>**

On 13 October 2017, ICA officers at Tuas Checkpoint found 2,190 cartons and 202 packets of duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in a modified compartment in the fuel bowser towed by a prime mover.



Empty fuel bowser towed by a prime mover found with duty-unpaid cigarettes. (Photo: ICA)



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found in the modified compartment at the base of the fuel bowser. (Photo: ICA)

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<sup>2</sup> The news release “More than 2,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes detected in a modified compartment of fuel bowser at Tuas checkpoint” was published on 16 October 2017 on [www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg).

## Case #2<sup>3</sup>

On 2 June 2017, ICA officers at Woodlands Checkpoint found 9,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes concealed in a consignment declared as assorted bread in a Malaysia-registered truck.



A total of 9,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes were seized. (Photo: ICA)



Duty-unpaid cigarettes found concealed in a consignment declared as assorted bread. (Photo: ICA)

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<sup>3</sup> The news release “9,000 cartons of duty-unpaid cigarettes seized at Woodlands checkpoint” was published on 5 June 2017 on [www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg).

# ENFORCEMENT AGAINST MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

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

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In 2017, 53 persons were convicted for marriage of convenience (MOC)-related offences. This was an increase of 23.3% compared to 2016, where 43 persons were convicted.

ICA will step up its enforcement actions against those who try to circumvent our laws by engaging in MOCs to obtain immigration facilities to stay in Singapore.

Members of the public should report any suspected cases of MOC, as well as immigration-related offences to ICA at 1800-391-6150 or via the ICA website ([www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg)). Any information provided will be treated with strict confidence.

	2016	2017	
Persons convicted for MOC-related offences	43	53	23.3% ▲



# CASE SPOTLIGHT



## **Twelve Arrested for MOC-Related Offences**

Between July and December 2017, ICA investigators worked relentlessly to pursue leads and arrested 12 persons involved in one particular case.

ICA investigators initially investigated a case of a suspected MOC between a Singaporean man and his Vietnamese 'wife'. Through investigations, the officers uncovered five other couples who had engaged in MOC. These couples all involved Singaporean men and Vietnamese women. The men, aged between 24 and 57, entered into sham marriages for monetary rewards. The women, aged between 23 and 34, engaged in MOCs with these men to prolong their stay in Singapore.

Ten of them have been dealt with and sentenced to jail terms ranging from six to 18 months. The Court proceedings for the remaining two persons are ongoing.

ICA takes a serious view of individuals engaging in MOCs. The penalties for such offences are a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years, or both.



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