

**Parliamentary Joint Committee on the
Australian Crime Commission**

**Inquiry into trafficking in women for
sexual servitude**

Submission No:30

Received 29 September 2003

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**The Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on the Australian Crime Commission
Suite S1 107
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Canberra ACT 2600**

**Submission of
Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc – for the aid and support of
immigrant and refugees in NSW
to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Trafficking for Sexual Servitude**

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Introduction: Immigrant Women's Speakout Association Inc – for the Aid and Support of Migrant and Refugee Women in New South Wales (Speakout)

Speakout is the NSW peak body representing immigrant and refugee women's issues, needs and ideas. As a peak body, its major responsibility is advocacy with and on behalf of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB) immigrant and refugee women on issues of concern. Speakout's current priority policy areas are domestic violence, employment, education and training.

Website: www.speakout.org.au

Speakout welcomes this opportunity to provide input in the inquiry on trafficking for sexual servitude.

Speakout would like to endorse the excellent submission by Project Respect, and in addition to the recommendations made in it, Speakout would like to raise the following 2 points:

1) Creation of a special visa category for trafficked women.

While we support the introduction of a visa for trafficked women, we are concerned that a special trafficked women visa may stigmatise women. If this new visa identifies the holder as a trafficked woman, she may be reluctant to seek services from organisations (government and non government) that need to identify her visa status in order to provide services (for example Centrelink, Migrant Resource Centres, Medicare). This may lead to essential services not been sought and accessed.

Speakout would like to suggest that:

Recommendation 1

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| <p>a) either the special visa be valid only as long as special services are needed, and then be rolled into another type of visa, such as a Protection visa
or
b) that the special trafficked women visa be written in such was as not to be identifiable as such by service providers.</p> |
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The visa should qualify women for a range of support services (including income, housing, education/training, health, counselling,) and exempt them from the 2-year waiting period.

2) Provision of information to Protection Visa applicants

Many traffickers make bogus Protection Visa application on behalf of trafficked women through Migration Agents, without the women's knowledge and consent, in order to gain working rights for the women while the application is processed, knowing only too well that the visa will be refused.

To prevent this from happening it is essential that women are given information on what type of visa they are applying for and the conditions and rights pertinent to that visa.

This information must be given to the women **in person** and **in their own language**.

Speakout would like to suggest that

Recommendation 2

Migration Agents be legally required to interview women applying for Protection visas through them in person and that at the interview they should provide information in the woman's language, through an interpreter, on the following:

- a) the type of visa sought,
- b) its conditions
- c) rights pertinent to the visa
- d) key contact points/support services available such as Immigrant Women's Speakout

Moreover, a written record of the above having been done should be kept, in the form of a checklist signed by the woman.