

Foreword

Drugs, illegal firearms, human trafficking – the top three criminal activities in the world. How do we contain them? How do we stop people endangering their lives by ingesting chemicals with their ice water in nightclubs? How do we stop young men using weapons, the effects of which they barely understand? How do we stop people being forced to labour in fields or brothels after being sold into slavery?

Our delegation was told time and time again in each jurisdiction we visited, that crime is functional and dynamic in perspective. It is a business, conducted on a business model, with national and international networks and hierarchies and hubs.

This means that each level of society can and has been infiltrated by organised crime. It is a cancer - active everyday and efficient enough to adapt quickly to changing circumstances.

In response, governments need to confront taboos - particularly in the area of civil liberties. Each jurisdiction that we visited expressed exasperation at the abuse of well-intentioned rights laws by wealthy criminals.

In this report, the Committee proffers solutions that may appear to some as harsh and uncompromising. Nonetheless, we firmly believe that they are critical to ensure that our law enforcement agencies are equipped to handle the ever-changing challenges posed by organised crime.

Australia responds to crime and criminal assets better than most. We should be very proud of our law enforcement agencies and officers.

We must maintain our vigilance and give those agencies the tools and support they require to hammer remorselessly those who would undermine the peace and order of our society.

Senator Stephen Hutchins
Delegation Leader

