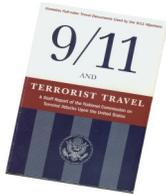


U.S. Strategic Recommendations

9/11 Commission Report



“Targeting travel is at least as powerful a weapon against terrorists as targeting their money. The U.S. should combine terrorist travel intelligence, operations, and law enforcement

in a strategy to intercept terrorists, find terrorist travel facilitators and constrain terrorist mobility.”

National Strategy To Combat Terrorist Travel (NCTC)

Strategic Objective 1: Suppress terrorists’ ability to cross international borders

Strategic Objective 3: Deny terrorist access to resources that facilitate travel



Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime (National Security Council)



“International human smuggling networks are linked to other transnational crimes including drug trafficking and the corruption of government

officials. They can move criminals, fugitives, terrorists, and trafficking victims, as well as economic migrants. They undermine the sovereignty of nations and often endanger the lives of those being smuggled.”

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EXTRATERRITORIAL CRIMINAL TRAVEL STRIKE FORCE

OVERVIEW

The Extraterritorial Criminal Travel Strike Force (ECT) is a joint partnership between the Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Criminal Division, Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section (HRSP). Using expert dedicated investigative, prosecutorial and intelligence resources to target and aggressively pursue, disrupt and dismantle foreign based criminal travel and alien smuggling networks, ECT supports the national strategy to combat terrorism and international organized crime.

THE THREAT

Experts examining counterterrorist measures after 9/11 have concluded that attacking illicit travel is a critical weapon in the fight against terrorism. Criminal travel networks – the formal or informal infrastructure of persons involved in facilitating the illicit transnational movement of people as principles or commodities - pose a threat to our national security by providing a readily available conduit through which persons seeking to harm United States interests can enter the country.

Aside from the national security risk, the high profit margins and low risk of serious consequences have helped turn human smuggling into a sophisticated global criminal enterprise, entangled with other transnational crime such as trafficking in persons, corruption, drug trafficking, kidnapping and murder. Powerful organized drug cartels are taking control of the human smuggling trade in some regions, charging tariffs for the use of smuggling routes, and kidnapping and extorting or forcing migrants to become foot soldiers. The ruthless violence that the cartels have displayed has carried over to their human smuggling related activities. In August 2010, 72 migrants were massacred by alleged members of the Zetas drug cartel in Mexico, after reportedly resisting attempts to extort or recruit them as drug runners. Moreover, the rates of abuses of migrants, including rapes of females, are alarming.

Primarily based in foreign countries, criminal travel networks typically do not operate like traditional criminal organizations. Rather, they depend on loose but highly effective international alliances involving various facilitators such as recruiters, brokers, document providers, travel agencies, transporters and corrupt foreign officials. A closely coordinated, comprehensive, and proactive international and domestic strategy is critical to effectively counter this problem.

In response to this challenge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the Criminal Division (CRM) of the Department of Justice partnered to lead an aggressive, integrated initiative designed to leverage existing law enforcement, intelligence, and policy making resources to address the problem. The Extraterritorial Criminal Travel Strike Force (ECT) builds on the expertise developed by CRM's Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section (HRSP), HSI, and their predecessors in the investigation and prosecution of numerous extraterritorial human smuggling organizations under the highly successful targeting project of the Interagency Working Group on Alien Smuggling and Trafficking (IWG). The IWG, co-chaired by CRM and the State Department, reports to the National Security Council.

THE ECT APPROACH

ECT is an intelligence driven program that identifies select targets based on the potential threat to national security, the sophistication of the criminal organization, and the serious humanitarian concerns raised by the human smuggling activities. Once a target is identified, a law enforcement team of HSI agents and HRSP attorneys with experience in transnational investigations and extraterritorial prosecutions is assigned to the investigation.

Supported by HSI intelligence analysts, the team is uniquely positioned to dismantle and disrupt criminal travel networks because of their specialized experience and their proactive approach to transnational investigations. The agents and prosecutors are well-versed in advancing foreign investigations, working with foreign law enforcement and governments, anticipating evidentiary issues for domestic prosecutions, preparing Mutual Legal Assistance Requests (MLATs), and extradition issues.

The goal of the ECT Strike Force is to systematically dismantle and disrupt the international and domestic operations of criminal travel networks,

identify and seize their assets and illicit proceeds, and identify systemic vulnerabilities that may be exploited by criminal elements to undermine immigration and border controls.

The Strike Force aggressively uses a variety of techniques, including the infiltration of identified targets through overseas undercover operations, to accomplish its investigative objectives. Further, the approach anticipates both the domestic prosecutions of key targets as well as the provision of technical assistance to foreign governments in cases of international prosecutions, as appropriate, to carryout the ECT mission.

SELECT CASES

U.S. v. Irfan Ul Haq, et al.: Ul Haq and his two co-defendants were convicted in 2011 of material support for terrorism and alien smuggling charges. The subject of an HSI/FBI sting operation, the defendants had agreed to help smuggle a person they believed to be a member of a terrorist organization from Ecuador to the United States. In 2013, Ul Haq was sentenced to 50 months in prison; his co-defendants were sentenced in 2011 to 40 months and 36 months.

Sharafat Ali Khan: This investigation targeted a key coordinator of a transnational human smuggling organization. Sharafat Ali Khan was a Brazilian-based Pakistani national who facilitated the smuggling of large numbers of nationals from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The organization was known to provide fraudulent travel documents to facilitate entry into Brazil and coordinated the continued movement of aliens through South and Central America enroute to the United States. In July 2016, Khan was arrested following his extradition to the U.S. from Doha, Qatar. In April 2017, Khan pled guilty to conspiracy to smuggle undocumented aliens to the United States.