



Joint Standing
Committee
on Foreign Affairs
Defence and Trade

**Tourism Industry
Inquiry Submission**

ABSTRACT

**Countering sexual
exploitation of children
in travel and tourism in
the Asia Pacific region**

16 March 2023

The Chair

JSCFADT Inquiry into Australia's Tourism Industry
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2601

Destiny Rescue Limited (Australia) – Countering Sexual Exploitation of children in travel and tourism in the Asia Pacific region

Dear Senator,

Destiny Rescue is pleased to make this submission to the Committee's inquiry into Australia's tourism industry. In particular, our submission relates to the examination of the role of Australia as a hub in support of tourism in the Asia Pacific region (the region).

The sexual exploitation of children by Australian travellers to the region is a grave issue of concern. In December 2012, the then-UN Special Rapporteur advised:

“Australians ... have been identified as the largest group of sex tourists prosecuted in Thailand (31% of the total).”

Destiny Rescue Ltd is an Australian-based international NGO with more than 20 years of experience in countering child trafficking, particularly in ASEAN. We recently celebrated our 11,000th rescue of an individual from human trafficking and child sexual exploitation.

Our submission outlines a comprehensive proposal for a Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign directed at departing Australians travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries. It is proposed that the campaign be funded by the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking Initiative or other funding source.

Yours sincerely,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Mergard'.

Paul Mergard
CEO Destiny Rescue Australia

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Executive Summary



Background

The JSCFADT inquiry into the tourism industry is examining the role of Australia as a hub in support of tourism in the Asia Pacific region (the region). Destiny Rescue believes this should include an investigation into potential awareness-raising campaigns to reduce the extent to which Australian tourists may be involved in the sexual exploitation of children in the region, which is an issue of grave concern.

Resurgent international tourism, post-COVID-19, is increasing the number of vulnerable children being exploited in the region due to tourism.

In December 2012, the then UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (the UN Special Rapporteur), Ms Najat Maalla M'jid (Ms M'jid) advised:

“Australians ... have been identified as the largest group of sex tourists prosecuted in Thailand (31% of the total).”¹

One-fifth of global tourists to ASEAN countries who responded to a 2012 survey claimed they had seen children or youths under 18 working in the sex industry.² Tourists wanted to help children they believed were at risk, but many were confused about what action to take.³

Ms M'jid recommended that:

*(a) Awareness-raising must be ongoing and tailored to the different target groups: children, families and communities in destination countries; travel and tourism professionals, **and travellers, including potential offenders**; ⁴ (Emphasis added)*

Australia has not funded a Child Safe Tourism campaign in ASEAN since 2012-2014

AusAID last funded a Child Safe Tourism campaign in ASEAN in 2012 – 2014. This reached over 15 million travellers⁵ in the South East Asia region. Tourists responded favourably to child-safe tourism communications, and the message positively impacted tourist behaviour.⁶

¹ December 2012 Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Ms Najat Maalla M'jid, to the Human Rights Council of the UN General Assembly; A/HRC/22/534 Pg 5 (UN Special Rapporteur M'jid Report, December 2012) (Refers to prosecutions between 1995 and 2006).

² Child Safe Tourism: The Tourist Perspective (World Vision, 2012), pg 2 (20.5%).

³ The Child Safe Traveller (World Vision, 2013), pg 2.

⁴ UN Special Rapporteur M'jid Report, December 2012, pg. 21, para 98.

⁵ <http://childsafetourism.org/world-vision-hands-child-safe-tourism-baton-code/>

⁶ Ibid pg 2.

The final Report of this campaign recommended that tourists (including Australian tourists) be provided with the following:

- (1) more information about how children are vulnerable to child abuse and exploitation in tourism in ASEAN countries; and
- (2) clear information on how to be a child-safe traveller.⁷

The Thai Government has stated that expanding the Thai Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project to cover the entire country is one of 6 key measures to maintain Tier 2 status and hopefully achieve Tier 1 status in the future (under the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report).⁸

Proposed Safe Children, Safe Traveller Campaign

Now is the time to follow through on these recommendations. Destiny Rescue recommends that a Safe Children, Safe Traveller awareness campaign for Australian travellers to the region be undertaken.

Recommendation: That **\$3.65M** be allocated from the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking Initiative, or other funding source to fund a 'Safe Children, Safe Traveller' campaign directed at departing Australians travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries.

Australian singer and songwriter, Dami Im, has recently been appointed as Australian Ambassador to Destiny Rescue.

Dami has written an open letter to the Government supporting the proposed campaign.

See next page.

⁷ The Child Safe Traveller, (World Vision, 2013).

⁸ <https://thaiembdc.org/2022/07/27/thai-government-to-advance-six-measures-against-human-trafficking/>

16 March 2023

Dear Senator,

Ambassador Support - *Destiny Rescue's Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign*

I have recently been appointed as Australian Ambassador for Destiny Rescue. I am delighted to provide my endorsement of their submission for a Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign.

I have always been passionate about making a difference in the lives of children in the developing world, and am aware of the number of men and travellers from countries like Australia who travel for sex tourism.

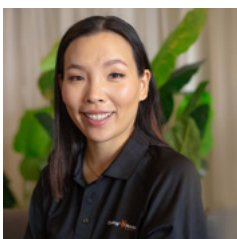
Ever since winning X-Factor Australia in 2013, I have been mindful of using my voice and profile for something significant and worthwhile.

I am inspired by the courage of the girls who are being rescued from human trafficking. They have overcome so much trauma and yet they are so resilient.

Destiny Rescue's submission to target Australian tourists travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries resonates with my passion for their cause.

I will be available to support the campaign, and I can be contacted via my Management Agency, Maven Agency, Ken Outch via ken@mavenagency.com.au or 0404 040 580.

Yours sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Dami Im'.

Dami Im

Australian singer and songwriter



Destiny Rescue Background

Overview

Destiny Rescue is an international non-profit organisation whose mission is to rescue children from sexual exploitation and human trafficking and help them stay free. Founded in 2001, and in operation for over 20 years, Destiny Rescue has rescued more children year-on-year (since 2011). We recently celebrated our 11,000th rescue and are driven by our strategic goal to rescue 100,000 children by 2032.

Objectives

Our vision is to play a leading role in ending the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children in our lifetime.

Aims

We aim to continue to expand our work:

- Rescuing individuals enslaved around the world;
- Keeping others from entering the sex trade through border intervention and trafficking awareness counselling;
- Ensuring justice for those who have been wronged; and
- Raising awareness globally.

Who we are

With more than 200 staff worldwide, Destiny Rescue operates in Thailand, Cambodia, the Philippines, Nepal, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, the Dominican Republic

and four undisclosed countries in Asia, Central and Latin America.

In each nation, we partner with a network of international Border Forces, local law enforcement, government agencies, NGOs, and other like-minded organisations who add their on-the-ground expertise in local communities and culture.

Focusing solely on the child sex trafficking aspect of modern slavery, we are one of the few organisations internationally to conduct direct rescues via a network of trained rescue agents to support the fight against child sexual exploitation. In addition, we collaborate with prominent NGOs and local law enforcement agencies on large-scale raids.

Destiny Rescue empowers rescued girls to develop agency and remain free through its Aftercare Programs and on-the-ground partners. Survivors are supported to become community leaders, journeying with the next generation of girls to ensure they are never again sold or kidnapped to be sexually exploited (including in the context of travel and tourism).

See *Appendix 1* for further background information regarding Destiny Rescue.

Countering sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism in the Asia Pacific region

Background

The current inquiry includes an examination of Australia's role as a hub to support tourism in the region. Destiny Rescue believes that this examination should include an investigation into the potential for awareness-raising campaigns to reduce the extent to which Australian travellers are involved in the sexual exploitation of children.

This has been an under-reported issue in Australia for many years:

*"(the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism) ... deserves significantly more attention than it has been receiving as a stand-alone concern."*⁹

The sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism is the exploitation of children for sexual purposes by people who travel locally or internationally to engage in sexual activities with children. "This often involves the use of travel agencies, transport, accommodation and other tourism-related services that facilitate contact with children".¹⁰

Destiny Rescue notes that the term 'child sex tourism' is broadly used in many quarters and in the literature of earlier periods. However, it is now recommended by international child protection professionals that this term be avoided.¹¹ One of the reasons is that the term may associate the crimes with the entire travel and tourism industry. Additionally, the term excludes many categories of travelling offenders (e.g. business travellers and military personnel who are not tourists).

Ms M'jid highlighted the difficulties in obtaining accurate data about the extent of the issue in different regions of the world.¹² As a result, it has been challenging to locate accurate contemporary data regarding the extent of the issue in the area. Some of the best available regional data relates to 1995-2006.¹³

The US Department of State is now taking the creation of demand for the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism into account as a factor in determining tier placement of countries in its annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.¹⁴

⁹ The Protection Project, January 2007, Foreword.

¹⁰ UN Special Rapporteur M'jid Report, December 2012, para 12, pg 5.

¹¹ Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Luxembourg Guidelines, 2016), pg 56.

¹² UN Special Rapporteur M'jid Report, December 2012, para 13, pg 5.

¹³ International Child Sex Tourism, Scope of the Problem and Comparative Case Studies, The Protection Project, The Johns Hopkins University, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, January 2007 (The Protection Project, January 2007).

¹⁴ US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, The Protection Project, January 2007, Foreword.

An issue for Australian tourism policymakers

There has been a significant resumption of international air travel by departing Australians into the region. Australia has a positive role to play as a hub to support tourism in the Asia Pacific region. However,

“The tourism industry (in the region) impacts children’s lives. Due to economic pull factors of the tourism sector, there is a correlation between child sexual exploitation and tourism.”¹⁵

The role of Australian travellers in the exploitation of trafficked children in the sex industry in several ASEAN countries, particularly Thailand and the Philippines, warrants immediate action. This has been the subject of Australian media commentary in the past, including:

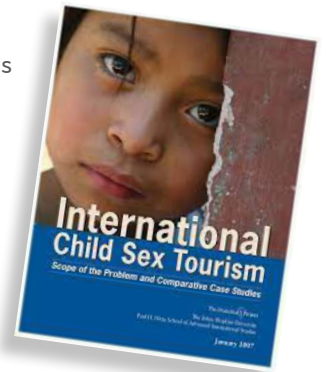


Thailand

“Australians ... have been identified as the largest group of sex tourists prosecuted in Thailand (31% of the total).”

This shocking statistic was quoted by the then-UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in her Report to the UN Human Rights Council on 24 December 2012 (the UN Special Rapporteur Report).¹⁶

This evidence was one of the findings of The Protection Project, a research project of The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore (the Research Project) into International ‘Child Sex Tourism’.¹⁷



The Research Project describes the scope of the problem of ‘child sex tourism’. It compares different responses adopted in several countries where ‘child sex tourism’ is emerging or significant, including Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand.¹⁸ The Research Project examined the cases of arrest of foreign child sex tourists and identified Australia as the most frequent country of origin for child sex offenders in Thailand.¹⁹

Philippines

The Protection Project also noted that Angeles City is considered one of the most notorious places in the Philippines for child exploitation. It provided the following estimate:

An estimated 13,000 Australians per year, second in number only to Americans, are reported to visit Angeles City, a center of prostitution surrounding the former Clark U.S. Air Force base in the Philippines.²⁰

¹⁵ World Vision - <https://www.wvi.org/asiapacific/childsafetourism>

¹⁶ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Najat Maalla M’jid; A/HRC/22/534 page 7.

¹⁷ International Child Sex Tourism, Scope of the Problem and Comparative Case Studies, January 2007, The Johns Hopkins University, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies.

¹⁸ The research related to the period 1995 – 2006. See page 164, *ibid*.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, pg 164.

²⁰ Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, Factbook on Global Sexual Exploitation: The Philippines (November 2005).

UN Special Rapporteur Recommendation

The UN Special Rapporteur Report made practical recommendations on protecting children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism.

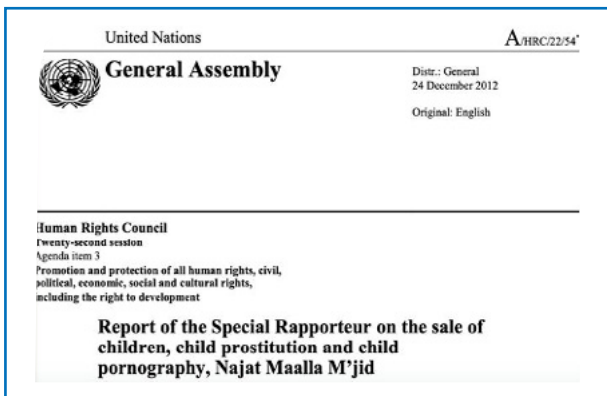
The then UN Special Rapporteur specifically recommended that:

*(a) Awareness-raising must be ongoing and tailored to the different target groups: children, families and communities in destination countries; travel and tourism professionals, **and travellers, including potential offenders**;²¹ (Emphasis added)*

Proposed action

In light of these concerning ASEAN statistics and Ms M’jid’s recommendation, Destiny Rescue believes that Australia has an obligation to continue to conduct awareness-raising campaigns directed at departing travellers bound for ASEAN countries – to counter the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism.

This is one very practical way Australia can support responsible tourism in the region.



See Destiny Rescue’s proposal for such an awareness-raising campaign on the next page.

²¹Special Rapporteur Report pg. 21, Para 98.



The Campaign

Destiny Rescue proposed *Safe Children, Safe Traveller Campaign*.

The need

The most recent Australian Government-funded study on child sex exploitation in the tourism industry in ASEAN was The Child Safe Traveller. The study recommended that tourists (including Australian tourists) be provided with the following:

1. **More information about how children are vulnerable to child abuse and exploitation in tourism; and**
2. **How to be a child-safe traveller (amongst other recommendations).²²**

The Thai Government has stated that expanding the Thai Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project to cover the entire country is one of 6 key measures to maintain Tier 2 status and hopefully achieve Tier 1 status in the future (under the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report (see below)).²³

Destiny Rescue considers that one option for implementing the recommendations arising from the Child Safe Traveller report findings would be to fund a new Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign.

The proposed campaign would complement the Thai

Government's Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project.

Now is the time to follow through on the recommendations of the then UN Special Rapporteur, the earlier Australian-funded child safe traveller studies, and of the Thai Government, about the benefits of such public campaigns for Australians travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries.

Key actions

Destiny Rescue proposes to collaborate with the outbound Australian tourism industry and key corporate members of that industry on the development of the messaging for the campaign.

A comprehensive survey and interview process will be undertaken to measure and report on campaign effectiveness.

Recommendation: That **\$3.65M** be allocated from the ASEAN-ACT Initiative to fund a 'Safe Children, Safe Traveller' campaign or other funding source directed at departing Australians travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries.

See *Appendix 2: Proposed Safe Children, Safe Traveller Marketing Campaign Overview*.

²² The Child Safe Traveller (World Vision, 2013), pg 25.

²³ <https://thaiembdc.org/2022/07/27/thai-government-to-advance-six-measures-against-human-trafficking/>



Global Tourism and Travel Industry - Countering Human Trafficking

The global tourism industry has been very active in working with governments to develop policies and awareness campaigns to combat the sexual exploitation of trafficked children in the travel and tourism sector.

Examples include:

WTTC - Countering Human Trafficking policy platform

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) is a global forum for the travel and tourism industry. It is made up of private sector and corporate members from the global business community and works with governments to raise awareness about the travel and tourism industry.

The global tourism industry, through the WTTC, has developed an action framework for preventing human trafficking.²⁴

The second pillar of the framework focuses on educating travellers: “aiming to (educate) travellers ...

on how to identify and report suspected cases of human trafficking and how to develop travel and

tourism practices that contribute to protection of vulnerable groups”.²⁵

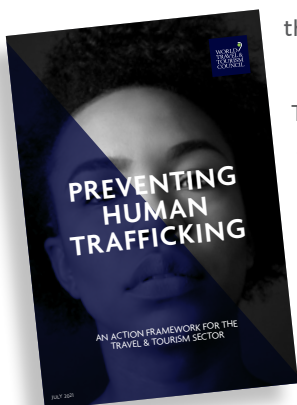
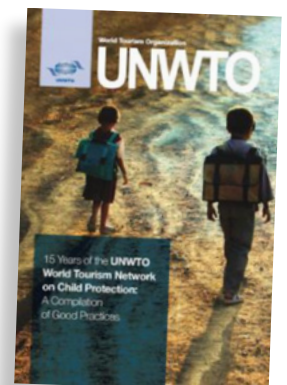
WTTC member organisations, including Hilton, Marriott, Emirates, Expedia, Airbnb, Carlson, and CWT, have implemented strong anti-human trafficking policies focusing on education and training.²⁶

United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) established a World Tourism Network on Child Protection (the UN Child Protection Network) in 2001.

The UN Child Protection Network produced A Compilation of Good Practices, covering effective counter-child exploitation in tourism campaigns over a 15-year period (the Compilation).²⁷

The Compilation provides examples of successful public education and awareness campaigns across several countries. *See next page.*



²⁴ <https://wtcc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/Human-Trafficking-Framework.pdf?ver=2021-07-27-113613-803>

²⁵ Ibid. pg 8.

²⁶ Ibid, pg 9.

²⁷ 15 years of the UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection: A Compilation of Good Practices.

Effective awareness-raising campaigns to counter the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism in the region.

There have been several effective awareness-raising campaigns to counter the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism in the region, including:



Indonesia

Campaign tagline:

'Protect Children (from sexual exploitation in tourism)'²⁸

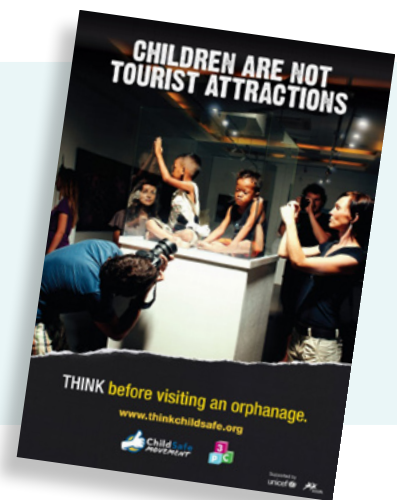
The Ministry of Tourism is active in initiatives such as this Tourism Awareness Programme;

ChildSafe

Campaign tagline:

'Children are not tourist attractions'

The ChildSafe Network is an international NGO that seeks to protect children from abuse and does so by raising awareness and promoting behavioural change in Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Indonesia.²⁹

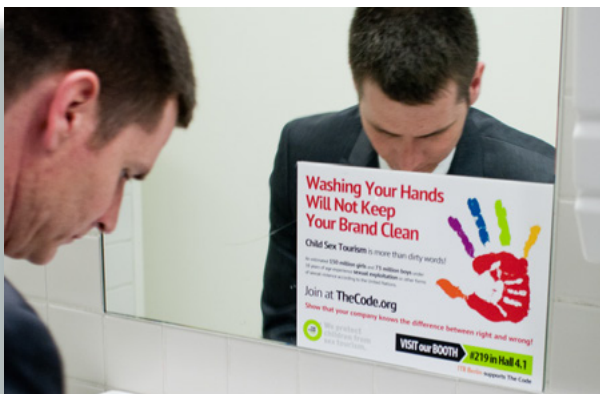


The Code

Campaign tagline:

'Washing Your Hands Will Not Keep Your Brand Clean'

The Code is one of the first initiatives to define the role and obligations of tourism companies regarding the issue of child protection.³⁰



Two Australian-funded campaigns referred to in the Compilation are discussed below.

²⁸ Indonesia: A Strong Partnership Against Child Abuse, Pg 7, Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid Pg 15.

³⁰ Ibid Pg 17.

Australian actions to counter child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in ASEAN

Australia has a history of funding awareness-raising campaigns to counter child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in ASEAN.

Child Wise Tourism program (1999 - 2009)

Campaign tagline:

“Turn a child-sex tourist into an ex-tourist”:³¹

The Australian Government, through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), funded Child Wise (an Australian NGO) to deliver the Child Wise Tourism program to address the then-emerging threat of ‘Child Sex Tourism’ in several South East Asian countries (1999 - 2009).



The program successfully encouraged national governments (particularly Tourism Ministries), law enforcement agencies, private sector companies, local communities and NGOs to establish policies and practices to prevent the sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism in ASEAN. The program received full support from all ten ASEAN countries and was profiled in the UN Child Protection Network Compilation.³¹

³¹ Ibid Pg 9.

Project Childhood (2010 - 2014)

AusAID then funded a dual prevention and protection initiative named Project Childhood (2010-2014) as part of the effort to combat child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam (the four Mekong countries).

Project Childhood: Prevention Pillar - Child Safe Tourism



World Vision Australia was engaged to implement the Prevention Pillar, which addressed the factors that make children vulnerable to sexual exploitation in ASEAN tourism regions.

As one component of this work, an awareness campaign, with the tagline 'Help protect our children – Be a Child Safe Traveller', was developed. Effective collaboration with the governments of the four Mekong countries, industry, the tourism sector, as well as travellers were key to the success of the campaign.

The Child Safe Tourism campaign produced a range of child-safe tourism communications for tourists as the target audience. It was profiled positively in the UN Child Protection Network Compilation.³²

Two reports were prepared in relation to two surveys conducted prior to and subsequent to the campaign. The first Report, "Child Safe Tourism: The Tourist Perspective" (World Vision, 2012), provided an overview of the research and discussed the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

³² Ibid pg 19.

³³ Child Safe Tourism: The Tourist Perspective (World Vision, 2012), pg 2.

³⁴ The Child Safe Traveller (World Vision, 2013), pg 2.

Findings of the two reports

The key findings of the two reports included:

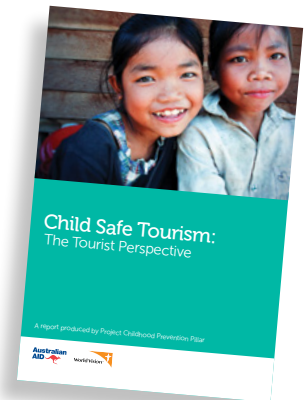
- One fifth (20.5%) of survey participants reported they had seen children or youths (under the age of 18) working in the sex industry;
- Overwhelmingly, all the participants who witnessed these types of exploitation said that it made them feel disgusted, sad, concerned or worried, helpless, guilty, angry and/or frustrated;
- Tourists wanted to help children they believed were at risk, but many were confused about what action to take; and

Tourists responded favourably to child safe tourism communications and the message positively impacted tourist behaviour.^{33/34}

Recommendations from the 2013 report

The second report, *The Child Safe Traveller* (World Vision, 2013), recommended that future action should be taken, as follows:

1. **To provide tourists with more information** about how children are vulnerable to child abuse and exploitation in tourism;
2. **To provide tourists with clear information** on how to be a child safe traveller;
3. **To provide tourists with more consumer choices** and options that align with child safe tourism principles;
4. **To publicly acknowledge and foster the understanding** that child safe tourism is a responsibility that is shared between governments, industry and travellers.



Destiny Rescue's proposal for a Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign seeks to implement these recommendations.

ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking Initiative



Destiny Rescue commends the Albanese Government for continuing the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking Initiative (the ASEAN-ACT Initiative).

The 10-year program (2018-2028) is aimed at rescuing victims from human trafficking and ensuring perpetrators are held to account.

The Partnership supports ASEAN member states to implement and report on their obligations under the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (ACTIP Convention).

Destiny Rescue acknowledges the importance of the ACTIP Convention in ensuring ASEAN member states are bound to implement and report (annually) on their obligations under the Convention.

It is proposed that the Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign be funded from the ASEAN-ACT Initiative. The current funding for the Initiative should be extended to cover the campaign if necessary, or alternative funding source should be identified.

ASEAN country tourism campaigns

Awareness-raising campaigns are also being prioritised by governments in the ASEAN region.

Thailand Government to Advance 6 Measures against Human Trafficking

The Deputy Secretary-General to the Prime Minister for Political Affairs in Thailand has provided an explanation for Thailand's achievement in its elevation in status from 'Tier 2 Watch List' to 'Tier 2' in the US Trafficking in Person (TIP) Report 2022.³⁵ He credited the achievement to the 'Team Thailand' approach, under which collaborative work resulted in concrete progress in 3 key areas.³⁶

In addition, he announced 6 key measures going forward in 2022 and 2023 to maintain Tier 2 Status and hopefully step up to Tier 1 Status in the future.

Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project: Thailand

One of the 6 measures announced by the Thai Deputy Secretary-General involves 'expanding the *Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project*' to cover the entire country as a proactive measure to protect children from trafficking.

In Thailand, with the support of UNICEF and local administrations, *ChildSafe Thailand* has been piloting a new Community-Based Tourism (CBT) program in Chiang Mai and Chonburi Provinces.³⁷ The aim of this program is to empower the community to mitigate the risks of child exploitation and to benefit from tourism as a boost to the prosperity of the local economy in a child-safe environment.

ChildSafe Thailand's goal was to raise awareness of the potential risks to the community arising from travellers, and to empower the community as a whole to develop and implement their own action plan in response.

ChildSafe and its parent organisation, *Friends-International*, have almost 25 years of experience

³⁵ On 24 July 2022, Pol Gen Thammasak Witcharaya.

³⁶ <https://thaiembdc.org/2022/07/27/thai-government-to-advance-six-measures-against-human-trafficking/>

³⁷ <https://thinkchildsafe.org/childsafes-in-community-based-tourism/>

in developing social solutions and understand the importance of local ownership in driving effective social change.

It is this CBT-focussed project which Destiny Rescue understands will be expanded to cover all of Thailand, as announced by the Thai Deputy Secretary-General.

Destiny Rescue's proposal to conduct a Safe Children, Safe Traveller campaign would be tailored to complement the awareness-raising work of the Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project in Thailand.

Center of Excellence against Human Trafficking- MOU

The establishment of the *Center of Excellence against Human Trafficking* (the Center) is one of the other 6 key measures that the Thai Deputy Secretary-General announced.

Destiny Rescue Australia commends the Australian Government for recently signing a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), a bilateral partnership agreement with Thailand to support the Center (2 November 2022).³⁸ The Center will enhance technical cooperation and extend anti-trafficking expertise between ASEAN countries.

Australia's support for the Center is part of the ASEAN-ACT Initiative.

Conclusion

There has been a significant resumption of international air travel by departing Australians into the region. Australia definitely has a positive role to play as a hub to support tourism in the region.

The then UN Special Rapporteur has recommended ongoing awareness-raising campaigns for departing travellers in order to reduce levels of child sexual exploitation in the context of travel and tourism.

The most recent Australian Government-funded study on child sex exploitation in the tourism industry, in ASEAN, recommended that tourists (including Australian tourists) be provided with the following:

1. more information about how children are vulnerable to child abuse and exploitation in tourism; and
2. clear information on how to be a child-safe traveller.³⁹

The Thai Government has stated that expanding the Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project to cover the entire country is one of 6 key measures to maintain Tier 2 status and hopefully achieve Tier 1 status in the future (under the US Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report).

The proposed Safe Children, Safe Traveller Campaign is designed to implement the recommendations of the then UN Special Rapporteur, the Child Safe Traveller report, and to also complement the Thai Government's Child Safe Friendly Tourism Project.

Recommendation: That **\$3.65M** be allocated from the ASEAN-Australia Counter Trafficking Initiative or other funding source to fund a 'Safe Children, Safe Traveller' campaign directed at departing Australians travelling to Thailand and other ASEAN countries.

March 2023

³⁸ <https://www.mol.go.th/en/news/>

³⁹ The Child Safe Traveller, 2013.

Appendix



Appendix 1:

Destiny Rescue Limited (Australia) – Background Information

Our structure

Because of the international scope of our work and worldwide partnerships, Destiny Rescue has a multinational organisational structure that gives us the ability to operate more effectively around the world.

Destiny Rescue International⁴⁰ is the central operating arm, providing support and logistics for rescues, program management, new pilots, and learning and evaluation.

Destiny Rescue Limited (Australia),⁴¹ Destiny Rescue USA⁴² and Child Rescue New Zealand⁴³ each provide essential strategic support for different regions of the world, and also assist with fundraising, strategic partnerships, and marketing and communications in their respective nations.

Destiny Rescue Limited Australia is made up of a team of 30 Australian-based staff. Destiny Rescue Limited is a registered charity in Australia.⁴⁴ The Australian Board is composed of 5 dedicated professionals with international leadership expertise in the NGO and corporate sectors, finance, business development and human resources.⁴⁵ Destiny Rescue Limited is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and adheres to the ACFID Code of Conduct, which defines minimum standards

of governance, management and accountability of development for non-government organisations (NGOs).

Destiny Rescue Limited acknowledges the Australian Government's Guidelines for NGOs: Working with trafficked people (Third Edition, 2015).⁴⁶

For further information, see the Destiny Rescue Limited (Australia) Annual Report for 2021.

Recognised Thought Leaders

One of Destiny Rescue's long-term objectives is to be recognised as a thought leader in the area of child sexual exploitation and child rescue.⁴⁷

We are engaged in ASEAN around trafficking policy change:

- In Australia, in March 2023, Destiny Rescue provided a detailed response to the Targeted Review of Divisions 270 and 271 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth), regarding slavery, slavery-like offences and trafficking offences;
- In Australia, in January 2023, Destiny Rescue lodged a comprehensive Pre-Budget Submission 2023-24;

⁴⁰ Destiny Rescue International, PO Box 25684 Fort Wayne, IN 46825| Tax-Exempt since May 2015; EIN: 47-2864435; www.destinyrescue.org

⁴¹ Destiny Rescue Limited is a company limited by guarantee incorporated under the Corporations Act.

⁴² destinyrescue.org; Non-profit organization in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Address: 10339 Dawsons Creek Blvd suite c, Fort Wayne, IN 46825, United States.

⁴³ <https://www.childrescue.org.nz> Child Rescue Charitable Trust registration number: CC 50592; Child Rescue Charitable Aid Trust registration number: CC 50751

⁴⁴ Registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) – ABN: 16 394 284 169

⁴⁵ Destiny Rescue Limited Annual Report, 2021, pg 28.

⁴⁶ Guidelines for NGOs Working with trafficked people (homeaffairs.gov.au)

⁴⁷ Destiny Rescue Ltd Australia, Annual Report, 2021, Pg 21.

- In Thailand, in February 2023, Destiny Rescue alongside our partner PSG signed an MOU with the Cyber Crime Investigation Bureau (CCIB) from the Royal Thai Police, enabling us to formally collaborate and empower the Police to respond to OSEC investigations;
- In 2022, Destiny Rescue was the only NGO in Thailand invited by the Thai Government to collaborate on a specialist law change working group to develop and initiate laws that protect children from online grooming;
- Destiny Rescue directly contributes to the United States Government's Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) and the United Nations annual Trafficking in Persons Report; and
- In the Philippines, our staff have been invited to participate in anti-trafficking councils, committees and Senate hearings.
- **Cambodia:** Our work is registered and conducted in partnership with government authorities. Maintaining a positive relationship is key to our success and continued work, in line with Cambodia's main anti-trafficking law (Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation); and
- **The Philippines:** Our relationship with the anti-trafficking authorities in the Philippines is strong and includes the Philippines National Police (PNP), the Philippines National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the National Government Agency, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Destiny Rescue's capability

Bringing over 20 years of operational expertise in rescuing and reintegrating victims of child exploitation and human trafficking, Destiny Rescue is strongly positioned to manage the delivery of a successful *Safe Children, Safe Traveller* Campaign.

International partnerships

We have strong on-the-ground partnerships with local governments and like-minded NGOs across our countries of operation. For example, across our ASEAN countries:

- **Thailand:** Destiny Rescue collaborates with over 45 organisations (Government, non-government and like-minded sectors);

Educating and Engaging an Australian Audience

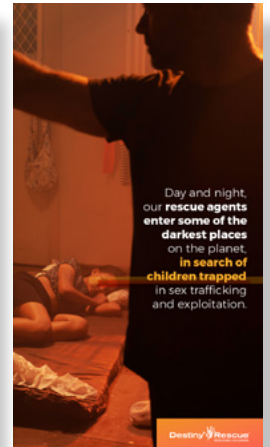
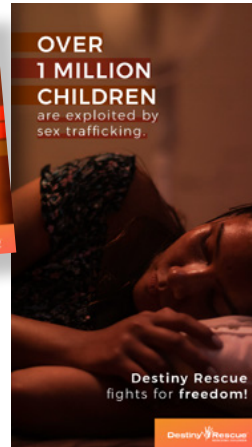
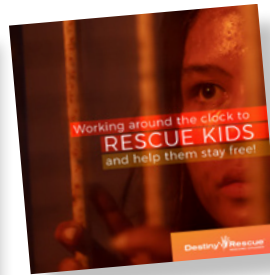
We have over 20 years of experience designing and executing public awareness campaigns to the Australian public to counter trafficking, including:



'STOP TRAFFICKING' TV CAMPAIGN

In 2022, Destiny Rescue's **Stop Trafficking TV Campaign**⁴⁸ reached **over 3 million Australian homes** on the east coast.

'STOP TRAFFICKING' SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS



A digital campaign ran alongside *Stop Trafficking TV Campaign*, resulting in over **13,000 Australians** pledging to take a stand against the sexual abuse and trafficking of children across the globe.



MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

In 2021 alone, Destiny Rescue held over **6,000** meaningful conversations with supporters of our cause, with **5,477 people contributing \$4.3 million** (helping to **rescue 2,386** individuals).

⁴⁸ <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/713950102/ade6361808>

Educating and Engaging an Australian Audience (continued)

DESTINY RESCUE PUBLICATIONS

In 2021, our publication **Mythbusters** was released to counter the top misconceptions relating to child sex trafficking in South East Asia (available in both electronic and hardcopy form), and was **distributed to 45,000** individuals. We also published a document educating the public on how to talk about the issue of child trafficking.



Australian women are **rescuing children from the sex trade.**
Scan the QR Code to learn more.
#iRescue
Join the Movement
Destiny Rescue
www.destinyrescue.org

WOMEN'S MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

In 2022, we engaged with Real Woman Magazine, which is distributed to **140,000 per edition**, to educate women on the subject of rescuing children from the sex trade, and inviting them to join our #iRescue movement.

I AM DISAPPEARED CAMPAIGN

In June 2021, stories and videos describing the reality of trafficked victims were used in a campaign called, 'I Am Disappeared'. The campaign **reached 70,000 people** – and **3,000** gave a gift with funds equivalent to **780 children being rescued** as a result of the Australian public support.



SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

In 2021 we shaped and ran an innovative social media campaign, resulting in approximately **370,000 people engaging with Destiny Rescue content** relating to the issue of trafficking.

Destiny Rescue
Rescuing children
from human trafficking & sexual slavery

Appendix 2:

Destiny Rescue proposed Safe Children, Safe Traveller Campaign

The proposed Safe Children, Safe Traveller Campaign will have specific and measurable outcomes to be agreed upon with the government prior to the commencement of the campaign. Proposed key outcome and measure:

Outcome: Change attitudes about child-safe tourism, including the physical/sexual violence and exploitation of women and children in ASEAN, by increasing awareness of issues through public awareness and education.

Key Measure: Survey the Australian public & returning travellers to retrospectively measure the level of change in individual knowledge, awareness and attitudes regarding child-safe tourism, including violence against women and children after the campaign.

How the initiative will be undertaken

The campaign will include:

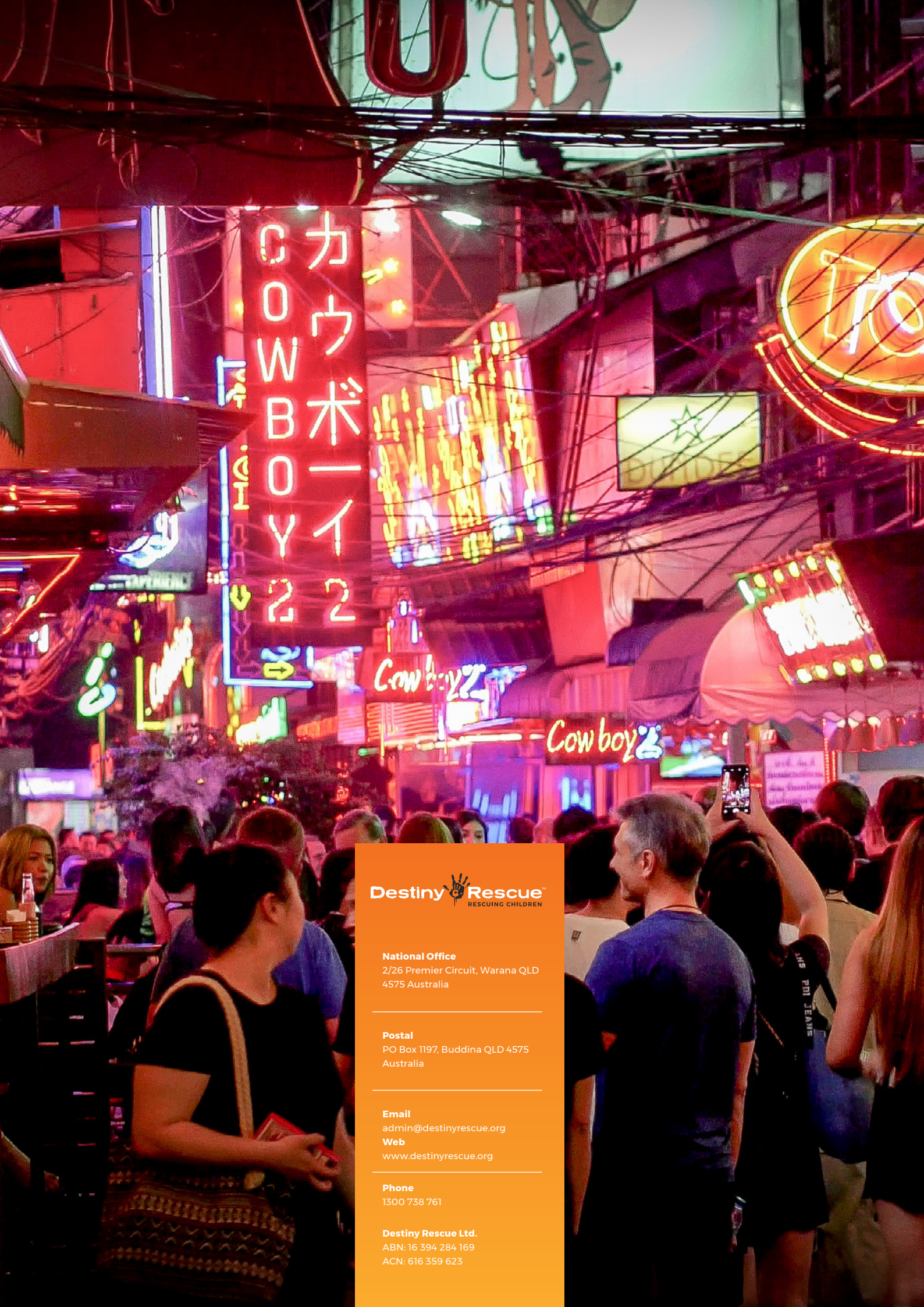
- ✓ Comprehensive project management, including audience mapping, budget and marketing content plan;
- ✓ Extensive stakeholder consultation;
- ✓ Define and coordinate marketing content plan, provide content briefs, and manage the copywriting and editorial process for all content;
- ✓ Implement multichannel digital and direct campaigns alongside Media Agency;
- ✓ Measure campaign effectiveness during the promotional period and make adjustments based on A/B testing and media performance; and
- ✓ Monitoring, optimisation, survey/evaluation and reporting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Destiny Rescue will monitor and assess results throughout the life of the campaign and modify its approach, as necessary, to ensure that required audiences are reached.

A *National Attitudes and Behavioural Snapshot Survey* will be conducted to evaluate campaign success. A written report on the results of the survey will contain data relating to Australian residents and their perceptions of safe travel. □

March 2023



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