

Destination: GOOD



The AirAsia Foundation team is leading a new **#knowthesigns** campaign to raise awareness on human trafficking. airasiafoundation.com

Know the Signs, Save a Life



Every 30 seconds, someone falls victim to human trafficking. The United Nations estimates that every year, six to eight million people are trafficked across international borders. Only one per cent is ever rescued.

These statistics make for a sobering thought. Human trafficking has grown to be the second largest global criminal enterprise after drug trafficking; the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates it to be worth a whopping USD150 billion. Of particular concern is that air travel is commonly used to transport victims because it is quick and efficient.

One organisation that has been making great strides in tackling trafficking on airlines is US-based NGO Airline Ambassadors International (AAI). Founded in 1996 by former American Airlines flight attendant Nancy Rivard, the organisation has trained staff in over 20 airports globally, and is recognised by the United Nations and the United States Congress for raising awareness on human trafficking.

In August, AirAsia became the first airline in Asia to host AAI at

four of its Asean hubs – Bangkok, Thailand; Jakarta, Indonesia; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; and Manila, Philippines. At the AirAsia Anti-Trafficking Roadshow, Rivard and fellow trainers Donna Hubbard and Andrea Hobart shared the development of anti-trafficking legislation in the US, their personal experiences, which included perspectives as trainers, spotters and survivors of human trafficking, and crucially, what airline staff should or should not do when confronted with a suspect case.

Underlying their message is the call for ordinary people not to turn a blind eye. Trafficking can happen anywhere, and to anyone. Victims are men, women and increasingly, children. By knowing the signs, we too can help save a life.

What's 'Destination: GOOD'?

A movement to encourage people to shop and travel sustainably

AirAsia Foundation is an ASEAN accredited civil society organisation



Contact Us!

Yap Mun Ching, Executive Director of AirAsia Foundation, is always on the lookout for exciting new social enterprises. Write in at foundation@airasia.com



WORD UP!

Yap Mun Ching explains why AirAsia Foundation is taking up the cause to fight human trafficking.



Two years ago, I met Aegile Fernandez, co-founder of Tenaganita, a Malaysian NGO that supports trafficking victims. Aegile related a case whereby an AirAsia staff had reached out for assistance after finding a victim crying at the airport. Thanks to the staff's referral, police investigations eventually broke up a slavery ring and rescued many lives. Inspired, Fernandez asked if AirAsia would consider training our frontline staff to recognise the signs of human trafficking and report suspect cases to the relevant authorities.

Her suggestion was compelling. As AirAsia expands its footprint regionally, it is inevitable that those with nefarious interests would seek to exploit the transportation networks that we provide. Our role as a responsible carrier is not to shut our eyes and ears but to join global efforts to combat trafficking.

Over the next two years, our goal is to ensure that every AirAsia crew and ground staff is properly informed. They will be trained to look out for tell-tale signs and alert the relevant authorities. Trafficking happens when we stay silent. We hope this initiative does not stop with AirAsia, but inspires other transportation providers, hotels and businesses to join the cause.

1. FROM LEFT: Andrea Hobart, AAI trainer; Donna Hubbard, American Airlines flight attendant and human trafficking survivor; Aegile Fernandez, co-founder of Tenaganita; ACP Maszely Minhad, Principal Assistant Director of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants Unit of the Royal Malaysia Police; and Nancy Rivard, AAI President, at the AirAsia Anti-Trafficking Roadshow held in RedQ recently.

DO YOUR PART

Learn to recognise suspect human trafficking cases and reach out.

These are some of the signs of trafficking victims.

- Uncertainty of destination or arrival details
- Disorientation or distress
- Reluctance to make eye contact
- Bruises or wounds

How you can help

- Inform law enforcement personnel at the airport
- Contact a local NGO that aids trafficking victims

Law Enforcement Hotlines

INDONESIA 110
MALAYSIA +603-8000 8000
PHILIPPINES 1343
THAILAND 1191

Airline Ambassadors International

Nancy Rivard (NR), Donna Hubbard (DH) and Andrea Hobart (AH) of US-based NGO Airline Ambassadors International (AAI) have trained thousands of airline and airport personnel to deal with human trafficking. In August, *travel 3Sixty*° caught up with the AAI trainers at the AirAsia Anti-Trafficking Roadshow in RedQ, AirAsia's headquarters in Malaysia.

LEFT TO RIGHT
American Airlines flight attendant and trafficking survivor, Donna Hubbard; AAI President and former American Airlines Flight Attendant, Nancy Rivard; and Alaska Airlines Flight Attendant Andrea Hobart.



What is Airline Ambassadors International?

NR: I founded Airline Ambassadors International to help vulnerable children worldwide by leveraging on contacts in the airline industry. We have three major programmes: we volunteer our time to escort medical care not available in the home country of those in need; we hand deliver aid every month to children in need around the world; and in 2009, we started training programmes to fight human trafficking.

What do you hope to accomplish with your training?

NR: The objectives are three-fold. First, to give participants an overview of the breadth of the problem of human trafficking, which is the number one human rights issue of our time, and the second largest criminal operations in the world, after drug trafficking. Secondly, to understand the effects on the victim. Lastly, to know how to recognise and report human trafficking in an airport setting. Flight attendants have one to eight hours with passengers – a longer time to make an assessment, which puts them in a position to provide vital information to law enforcement. An immigration officer may have only a minute or two.

What is the scale of human trafficking in the world today?

NR: In 2014, the last time numbers came out officially, the International Labour Organisation estimated 21 million victims. The Global Slavery Index estimates upwards of 57 million victims worldwide!

As a human trafficking survivor, tell us how can one become entrapped by traffickers?

DH: Not all human trafficking

11
17

COMPILED BY: ABBY YAO



AirAsia kicked off its anti-trafficking campaign by inviting AAI to share its expertise in training front liners to spot signs of trafficking. From 2018, the airline will begin rolling out training for its cabin crew and front liners to recognise the signs of trafficking and to refer concerning cases to law enforcement and victims-assistance units.

is violent or forced. Some of it is fraud. In my case, it was coercion leveraged by threats against my children. I made some irresponsible decisions and put myself in a vulnerable position. I saw friends killed. I saw men who had no conscience and didn't care who they hurt to get what they wanted. It was always about money, weapons, drugs. But I really believed that there was something greater in me, that I am so much more than the pain I went through.

It took several years before I was able to talk about what had happened to me. Nancy gave me a platform, not just to tell a story that gets people emotionally involved but proactively involved, and make them do something so that another girl doesn't have to go through what I did.

What are the top tell-tale signs of human trafficking?

AH: Not being in control of travel

documents is on top of the list. Also, look for a combination of these: If the traveller seems fearful and not dressed appropriately for the weather, if there are people travelling together that don't seem to have a relational connection, if somebody appears drugged, if you get inconsistent stories from people who are travelling together, if there is evidence of scarring or bruising on the traveller and they avoid eye contact. These are all red alerts. Flight attendants can pick up when something seems off. That's when you want to look closer and get your peers involved. See if they come up with the same observations.

What can passengers do when they come across a suspect case?

NR: Alert your flight attendants and call the hotline numbers.

AH: What we at AAI train flight attendants to do is to gather all the details as discreetly as possible and pass them over to the pilots. The



Learn more about Airline Ambassadors International at airlineamb.org



11
17

pilots will then contact ground operations. The whole point is to gather sufficient information and let law enforcement do what they're trained to do. But anybody can download the Airline Ambassadors app to report an incident.

What needs to be done?

NR: Public awareness is key. This involves, in our case, educating the airline industry. We're so thrilled with the leadership of AirAsia, which is the first airline that specifically requested for training. We need to engage every airline in the world so that the critical infrastructure of the airline industry is not used to support human slavery.

DH: When there's somebody on our airplane who feels that their life is in danger, it's a cabin safety issue. Everybody has to be involved.

AH: We need every airport, airline and airplane to be a safe zone. ○

