



Social Justice STOCKTAKE



Modern Slavery

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Are you surprised modern slavery appeared in the Stocktake and where it sits, at the lower levels of concern?

While slavery is far more common than most people would imagine it is often thought of as something that does not happen in Australia. The truth is that modern slavery is common and impacts on almost all of us through the goods and services we purchase. It also absolutely happens in Australia but by its very nature it is kept hidden from the general population.

Most people think slavery is a thing of the past, but what is modern slavery?

Modern slavery is an umbrella term that covers a range of criminal activities, including forced labour, human trafficking and servitude. In Australia, modern slavery also includes forced marriage.

Many people think of sex slavery when this topic comes to mind. What percentage of slavery would you estimate involves involuntary or coerced sex?

This is difficult to estimate because of the hidden nature of slavery. The most common forms of slavery identified by the AFP in recent years are forced marriage and domestic servitude. We also know that over 70 per cent of victims of human trafficking around the world are women and that involuntary or coerced sex is an indicator on several kinds of modern slavery.

Why does slavery still exist in the modern world, including Australia?

There are several key drivers of modern slavery, including economic, political and social drivers. Slavery still exists because of poverty, discrimination and marginalisation, and gender-based violence. Despite laws criminalising modern slavery practices, governments contribute to the problem through hostile border protection policies and poor regulation and law enforcement. It also exists because of the demand for cheap goods produced in short time frames.

What are some clues that could indicate someone is effectively being held as a slave?

Indicators include someone always being accompanied or watched by another person, often their employer. They might live where they work and be reluctant to talk with others about their situation. It is important to know that many victims are threatened and coached so people should not assume a person is not a victim just because they say everything is alright. The AFP have provided a list of



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indicators at <https://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/crime-types/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-slavery-indicators>.

What should someone do if they think they might be witnessing slavery?

If you think you may be seeing a person experiencing slavery or slave-like conditions you should:

- 1- Call 000 if a person is in immediate danger.
- 2- Check the indicators of modern slavery – you can find indicators to look at for at <https://www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/crime-types/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-slavery-indicators>.
- 3- You can call The Salvation Army's Safe House to make a referral or seek advice on 1300 473 560 or endslavery@salvationarmy.org.au.

What do you believe should be done about this problem in Australia?

We need better data to understand the problem and help direct resources. We also need better resourcing and training for law enforcement agencies, particularly state police, on how to engage effectively with victims so they are protected and can contribute to holding their perpetrators accountable. We also need more local responses where more people are able to be a part of strategies to identify, respond to and prevent modern slavery from happening in Australia.

What is The Salvation Army doing about this problem?

The Salvation Army engages at every level in the fight against modern slavery, from direct services to community and business engagement to policy and research. We operate the only refuge and transitional housing program for slavery survivors, and we also operate the only survivors advocacy group, providing people with lived experience to shape public discourse and policy on slavery.

What can someone who is a victim of modern slavery expect when presenting themselves to The Salvation Army?

They can expect to be believed and supported. They can expect unconditional, needs-based support that is completely unattached from their participation in a criminal justice process. They can also expect assistance in reconnecting with loved ones back home and help with safety planning if they are fearful. They can expect to be referred for free legal advice and help accessing other services, including health care, if they request it.