



SEMIANNUAL HUMAN SEX TRAFFICKING PROSECUTIONS UNIT REPORT

January –
June 2017

Human sex trafficking is an epidemic affecting over 21 million people worldwide—more than seven times the population of Nevada. It is easy to think of human trafficking as a crime only occurring in foreign countries suffering through war and poverty. But many of its victims are right here in Nevada. The Office of the Nevada Attorney General continues to collaborate with local law enforcement, community leaders, victim advocates and others to create solutions and boost the capacities of the office towards eradicating this growing problem. As a community, we must actively work to identify and understand what drives human trafficking so we can more effectively combat it. Eradicating human trafficking is an ambitious goal, but it is one we must commit ourselves to fulfilling. I hope that this report offers insight to the efforts my office already has underway.

I. Background Concerning the Nevada Attorney General's Human Sex Trafficking Report

Under NRS 201.345, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and Nevada's district attorneys may prosecute violations of NRS 201.300 or 201.320. During the 2015 legislative session, the OAG secured funding for one human trafficking investigator. The Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means asks that the OAG provide semiannual reports to the Interim Finance Committee regarding the number of human sex trafficking cases reported, investigated and prosecuted—by geographic location in the State. This report summarizes relevant OAG activities from January 1, 2017 to June 30, 2017.

II. Progress of Investigation and Prosecutions Divisions

In the field of investigations, the OAG continues to actively address general sex crimes and trafficking areas. There are two criminal investigators assigned full-time to the Washoe County Sheriff's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force in Reno; one full-time forensic examiner assigned to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) and FBI's ICAC Task Force in Las Vegas; and one full-time criminal investigator dedicated to investigating missing and exploited children matters in Las Vegas. This current level of engagement has continued to produce positive results in both the federal and state criminal justice systems.

In addition to the resources above, the human sex trafficking investigator within the OAG continues to work with the LVMPD Vice and Sex Trafficking Investigations Unit on a full-time basis. The investigator has participated in numerous vice related operations for the purpose of identifying and potentially rescuing victims of sex trafficking, as well as identifying and building cases against the traffickers. Because victims are often reluctant to cooperate and traffickers are frequently involved in other violent crimes, investigators are now working to develop proactive investigations against traffickers independent of the pandering or sex trafficking cases. These proactive long-term investigations are based on criminal intelligence obtained through short-term reactive, short-term proactive and other long-term proactive investigations. The majority of short-term reactive investigations are generated as a result of vice-related calls for service, patrol officer contacts and complaints received via LVMPD's information complaint system. Short-term proactive investigations are generated as a result of undercover operations targeting street level prostitution, illegal brothels and online advertisements offering unlicensed sexual services for sale. Long-term proactive investigations are generated as a result of information received regarding the pimps and/or traffickers, and tips received from other units such as financial crimes that may be vice related but require additional investigative resources to determine what specific criminal activity may be occurring.

The following table illustrates the number of undercover vice operations the human trafficking investigator has participated in during the last six months. The majority of the undercover vice operations conducted over the last six months were in support of pandering and/or sex trafficking investigations, and not specifically focused upon street enforcement. Additionally, the table lists the number of cases that the investigator was assigned as a co-case agent and the number of juveniles and adults who disclosed that they were sex trafficking victims. The table also illustrates the total number of women contacted during the undercover vice operations.

Vice Operations Conducted	Investigations Assigned	Juvenile Victim Recoveries	Adult Victim Recoveries	Juveniles/Adults Contacted
5	35	0	4	0/29

It should be noted that not all individuals engaged in illegal prostitution who come into contact with the Vice and Sex Trafficking Investigations Unit disclose to investigators that they are victims of sex trafficking. However, all are offered the services of community based organizations (NGOs) that serve as safe havens for victims of sex trafficking. The Salvation Army Seeds of Hope is one of the NGOs that offers services and support to victims of sex trafficking including shelter, food, transportation, therapy and social services. The victim advocates from Seeds of Hope also respond to the scene to transport victims to a safe place. Additionally, when appropriate, victims are transported by patrol officers or detectives to the Seeds of Hope facility or the women's shelter where they can meet with victim advocates.

When a victim of sex trafficking discloses their victimization to staff at an NGO, including Seeds of Hope, the Vice and Sex Trafficking Investigations Unit is contacted and an investigation is initiated. At that point, the Vice and Sex Trafficking Investigations Unit initiates a human trafficking investigation.

The OAG and LVMPD's continued collaboration and participation in the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT), including involvement with community based NGOs, remains an integral part of the investigative team and victim recovery process.

A. Three Notable Human Trafficking Complaints:

Over the last six months, the OAG received three notable human trafficking complaints:

On December 28, 2016, the LVMPD Financial Crimes Section developed information regarding activity on accounts belonging to a male subject and two female subjects. The Wells Fargo AMLI indicated that the source of the funds being moved between the accounts could not be verified, and it was believed that the source might be vice related. According to bank records, money orders were being deposited into the personal account belonging to the male, after which the cash was immediately withdrawn from the same account. Between April 1, 2016 and June 30, 2016, the total dollar amount of money orders deposited was \$16,500.

On other occasions, the male subject cashed the money orders and between March 29, 2016 and July 2, 2016, the total dollar amount of money orders cashed by the male was \$49,429. The majority of the money orders were deposited or cashed at various bank branches throughout the Las Vegas area. However, there were also transactions at Wells Fargo Bank branches in Ontario, CA, St. George, UT, Missoula and Great Falls, MT and Leawood and Olathe, KS.

Additionally, bank records showed that all three subjects were listed on a jointly owned account, and one of the females also had an individually owned account with the bank. Between September 30, 2015 and March 25, 2016, there were cash deposits in both the individually owned and jointly owned accounts totaling \$56,400. The investigation revealed that there was no legitimate source for the cash deposits which were withdrawn in the form of cashier's checks made payable to the male.

During the investigation, detectives were unable to uncover evidence that the activity of the three subjects was in any way vice related. On February 15, 2017, it was recommended that the case be closed until such time that evidence of a vice related crime or other criminal activity is uncovered.

On September 13, 2016, investigators received additional intelligence information regarding pre-paid reloadable products being utilized by a male and two female subjects. Based on the account activity, the male and two females appeared to be utilizing prepaid products to conceal the source of the funds. Essentially, the two females had subaccounts and were uploading cash to the master account belonging to the male. Within minutes or hours of the cash uploads, the male subject would withdraw the cash from ATMs and/or make point-of-sale purchases. During the course of the investigation, more information was obtained showing similar activity on the male subject's accounts with those institutions. It was also discovered that the male subject frequented a Las Vegas casino ATM and withdrew more than \$28,000 where he subsequently used the prepaid reloadable accounts to rent hotel rooms.

During the investigation it was determined that all three subjects were possibly involved in schemes to defraud unsuspecting victims, although there have been no complaints received regarding these fraud schemes. Investigators were unable to uncover evidence that the activity of these three subjects was in any way vice related. On 2/15/17, it was recommended that the case be closed until such time that a victim of the fraud schemes comes forward, or evidence of a vice related crime is uncovered.

On April 17, 2017 the OAG received an email complaint from a local resident who stated that pornography was being filmed at two residences in his neighborhood. He also alleged that he believed a third residence was possibly involved in prostitution. The complainant provided a website where the video footage was uploaded, and stated to investigators that his street was clearly visible in the video. He admitted to observing female actors wearing only bikinis being filmed on the street, but denied ever observing any sex acts performed in view of the public.

Additionally, based upon a review of Clark County Ordinance 6.20.030 requiring permits for filming, it was determined that this provision only applies to activity on private property when such filming impacts public safety, vehicular or pedestrian traffic, or when filming has the potential to impact public property or when filming includes pyrotechnics, flame, special effects or laser.

Investigators were unable to uncover any evidence to support the allegation that prostitution related activity was occurring at the residence indicated by the complainant; however, investigators were able to determine that all three residences were involved in the production of pornography. There was no further action taken and the case was closed until such time that a victim comes forward or information of a crime is reported in reference to the above mentioned residences.

In addition to prosecuting matters referred to the OAG, our Bureau of Criminal Justice participates in the Southern Nevada Human Trafficking Task Force. The Task Force is sponsored by the LVMPD and focuses on coordinating efforts between prosecutors, law enforcement and victim advocates in Clark County.

III. Public Outreach and Educational Programs

A. Fundraising Efforts for Nevada's Human Trafficking Contingency Account

In 2013, Assembly Bill (AB) 311 was passed authorizing the Department of Health and Human Services to create a contingency account to allocate money to nonprofit corporations and agencies that assist victims of human trafficking. The account is entirely donation based, and helps Nevada's human trafficking survivors obtain temporary housing, relocation and/or transportation costs in emergency situations. Under AG Laxalt's leadership, the OAG has co-hosted three benefit dinners supporting victims of human trafficking. These dinner events have featured a discussion of AB 311, as well as keynote addresses from survivors of human trafficking and other experts. The third benefit dinner was held in July, 2017. Though the funds raised from this dinner are not yet available, the prior two dinners raised more than \$76,000 for Nevada's human trafficking contingency account.

B. Campaign for National Human Trafficking Awareness Month

In January 2017, the OAG launched a television and radio campaign during National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The campaign was aimed at promoting awareness for the above referenced human trafficking contingency account, including the availability of funds for temporary housing, relocation and/or transportation costs for human trafficking survivors. The announcements appeared on television and radio stations in both English and Spanish. Within the first two weeks of the campaign's launch, two requests from local non-profit organizations were made to obtain available funds to assist human trafficking survivors.

C. Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

On July 26, 2017, the Nevada Coalition to Prevent the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children will hold its next meeting in Las Vegas. It is expected that the five subcommittees will provide an update on their progress over the last year. The five subcommittees will continue to meet on the following schedule:

The Prevention & Awareness Subcommittee develops a means to raise awareness within the community with specific tools for each target group, such as parents of victims. Meetings have been scheduled on the second Monday of every month from 1 to 3 p.m. since January 19, 2017.

The Training Subcommittee gathers information on current, available training, develops training standards to be utilized statewide, and determines the most effective and efficient way to provide the necessary training. A survey will be provided to committee members to obtain information on available resources, what members can provide in terms of training, and how the training can be made available to entities statewide. Meetings have been scheduled on the second Thursday of every month from 9 to 10 a.m. since January 12, 2017.

The Engagement Subcommittee puts together the standardized screening tool to address first contact issues. These are issues facing juveniles during their initial contact and assessment by governmental and non-governmental agencies. The goal is to provide a standardized and effective screening tool to doctors, nurses, social workers and others involved in the assessment of juveniles who are suspected of having been sexually exploited. These meetings have been scheduled as appropriate since January 17, 2017.

The Care Coordination Subcommittee puts together a comprehensive list of resources available within the communities served, and determines the most effective way to connect the victims and their families with those resources. Meetings have been scheduled for the last Tuesday of every month from 1 to 3 p.m. since January 31, 2017.

The Data Analysis Subcommittee creates and manages a clearinghouse responsible for gathering, analyzing and sharing with various agencies all relevant data concerning Commercially Sexually Exploited Children. Meetings have been scheduled for the second Monday of every month from 3 to 4:30 p.m. since February 13, 2017.

D. Children's Cabinet

On February 1, 2017, the Children's Cabinet Center for Aspiring Youth and Cottage of Change held its grand opening in Sparks. The event was attended by Governor Brian Sandoval, First Lady Kathleen Sandoval and Children's Cabinet Executive Director Michael Pomi. Invitations were also sent to other state offices and law enforcement agencies. The Center is a collaborated community effort to protect and provide youth who are homeless, aging out of foster care, neglected or in a threatening situation with a family-friendly living environment and wraparound services.

E. Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY)

The OAG Human Trafficking Investigator and an LVMPD Detective partnered to conduct an interview of an alleged juvenile sex trafficking suspect at the NPHY facility. Investigators were able to determine that the juvenile was not involved in sex trafficking and the allegation was unfounded. While at the NPHY, investigators were offered a tour of the facility and provided information related to the services offered to juveniles. In addition to providing a safe place for juveniles to meet during the day, the NPHY offers counseling and job search assistance, as well as hot showers and personal hygiene supplies. The investigator is currently working with OAG staff to organize a donation drive to gather needed supplies for the NPHY.

F. Youth With A Mission (YWAM)

On March 3, 2017, the OAG Human Trafficking Investigator and an LVMPD Detective partnered to teach a ninety minute block of instruction on sex trafficking to a group of missionaries at the YWAM. The group was comprised of missionaries from within the U.S. as well as from Australia, China and Sweden. The course provided a basic understanding of sex trafficking, the rules of the game of prostitution and recruitment process awareness training for both juvenile and adult victims, followed by examples of real cases worked by the investigators and a question and answer session.

G. Advanced Human Trafficking Investigations Training

From June 19 through June 21, the OAG participated in the Advanced Human Trafficking Investigations Training sponsored by the Southern Nevada Human Trafficking Taskforce. The training, held over the course of three days, was attended by approximately 40 law enforcement officers and prosecutors. The training was co-taught by the Upper Midwest Community Policing Institute and the National Attorneys General Training and Research Institute (NAGTRI), and also included a presentation by a member of the OAG.

H. Clark County Department of Family Services Collaboration

The OAG continues to coordinate with the Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS) on the following topics:

Screening Tool – DFS continues to develop a screening tool for assessing the needs of actual or potential juvenile victims of CSEC. This involves an evaluation of the criteria for reporting information to law enforcement or other non-governmental organizations (NGO) so that victims may access appropriate services.

Prevention & Outreach – DFS is collaborating on an ongoing basis with the LVMPD, the Southern Nevada Human Trafficking Task Force, Clark County District Attorney Office, Clark County School District, Las Vegas Mayor Faith Initiative, and the New Hope Foundation to produce and disseminate information about the prevention of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). As part of the prevention and outreach efforts, DFS is working with LVMPD to distribute pamphlets at the 1st Friday event to raise awareness about CSEC, and provide information about resources available to victims. Additionally, the same information will be published on the LED screens throughout the event.

Southern Nevada Children's Assessment Center (SNCAC) – A clinical unit to address CSEC victims is being developed within the SNCAC. The clinical unit members will have expertise in dealing with CSEC victims and will work to assess the needs of each victim and establish a continuum of care. The goal of the clinical unit will be to function as a one-stop shop where mental health and medical care, housing, and other needs can be addressed simultaneously.

Other Developments – The DFS Legal & Strategic Initiatives Manager is currently working on creating a CSEC policy for DFS that is based on and conforms to the statewide CSEC guidelines. The new policy will provide DFS staff with guidance on working with CSEC victims as well as outside agencies.