



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

# Travel Aware drug smuggling assets

## Toolkit for partners



# Background

## **Background:**

The FCDO and NCA have noted a sharp increase in drug smuggling arrests among British Nationals (BNs), both abroad and in the UK. The majority of arrests are linked to cannabis originating from Thailand. This follows the decriminalisation of cannabis in Thailand in 2022.

There is a serious risk of coercion by organised crime groups to BNs. Several have been offered money in exchange for carrying bags through customs.

The following assets include cannabis-specific messaging, but also general anti-drug smuggling warnings.



# Aims

## **The campaign's aims are:**

- To increase awareness among British travellers of the varying penalties for drug smuggling abroad.
- To warn BNs of predation by organised crime groups (OCGs) seeking to exploit the naivety and vulnerability of travellers.

## **Travel Aware campaign aims:**

- To reduce the number of preventable incidents involving British nationals abroad that require consular assistance. This reduces time and financial resource spent by the British Government.
- To drive users to GOV.UK's foreign Travel Advice service and other relevant GOV.UK pages



## Who this toolkit is for

- This toolkit is for all posts and partners. It provides guidance on how you can promote awareness of the consequences of drug smuggling.
- As well as reducing consular cases, increasing awareness of the consequences of drug smuggling will protect the safety and security of British nationals abroad.



# Audience

- The Thailand-specific asset is, of course, targeting British nationals travelling to, or through, Thailand.
- The rest of the assets are generic, so as to be used anywhere.
- A large proportion of our audience is young people and those who are uninformed or naïve about the potential severity of the penalties for smuggling drugs.



## Key messages

- Do not carry anything through customs for someone else.
- Do not carry cannabis through customs for someone else.
- Do not carry cannabis out of Thailand.
- Do not carry drugs through customs for someone else.



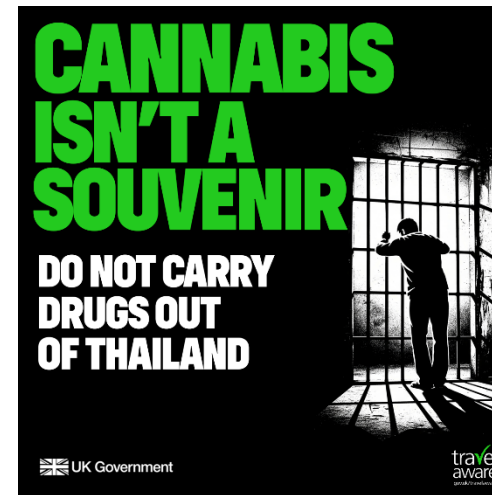
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## Thailand-specific assets

As the majority of drug smuggling consular cases are driven by BNs smuggling cannabis out of Thailand, this asset is location and drug specific.

This is available in 2 dimensions: square and vertical.

**Assets will be supplied by Kindred**





## General drug assets

We have 3 static assets relating to general drug smuggling (i.e. non-location specific).

One mentions cannabis, another 'drugs', and another 'anything', to cover all bases.

Designs are available in 2 dimensions each: square and vertical.

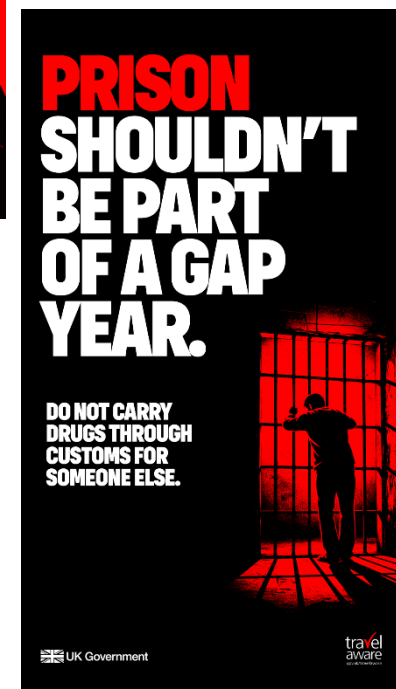
**Assets will be supplied by Kindred**



**THEY'RE  
GOING HOME.  
YOU'RE NOT.**

DO NOT CARRY ANYTHING  
THROUGH CUSTOMS  
FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

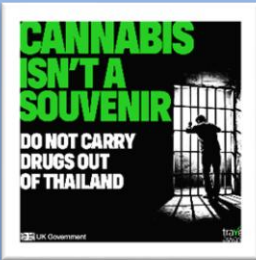

UK Government



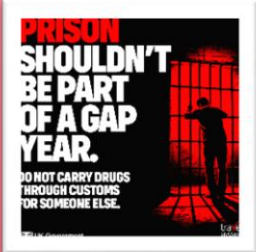





# Example social/digital posts

Message	Example copy	Asset
Do not carry cannabis out of Thailand	<p>Foreign legal systems have varying penalties for cannabis possession. British nationals caught carrying cannabis could be faced with lengthy prison sentences and in some countries, the death penalty.</p> <p>That is why our advice is clear – do not carry cannabis out of Thailand.</p> <p>For more information, check: [Thailand Safety and Security page - Travel Advice]</p>	
Do not carry cannabis through customs for someone else.	<p>Criminal gangs are known to pressure people into carrying drugs. Always pack your own luggage and do not carry anything through customs for someone else.</p> <p>For more information, check [post-relevant Safety and Security page - Travel Advice]</p>	



Message	Example copy	Asset
Do not carry drugs through customs for someone else.	<p>Criminal gangs in the UK and elsewhere are known to coerce people into carrying drugs across borders.</p> <p>Do not allow yourself to be persuaded.</p> <p>For more information, check: [post-relevant Safety and Security page - Travel Advice]</p>	
Do not carry anything through customs for someone else.	<p>Criminal gangs in the UK and elsewhere are known to coerce people into carrying drugs across borders.</p> <p>Do not allow yourself to be persuaded.</p> <p>For more information, check: [post-relevant Safety and Security page -Travel Advice]</p>	



## How you can support us

- Retweet/share our social media posts. We will begin using the assets from 11<sup>th</sup> August.
- Amplify our key messages in your own content across a range of channels during the winter campaign period. Please do tag us/our handles, so that we see your posts and can amplify in return!
- Direct your audience to FCDO Foreign travel advice or the Travel Aware campaign page wherever possible – UTM's can be provided
- Sharing our new assets (attached) or, create bespoke graphics incorporating our key messages



## Useful links

- **Our campaign social media channels:**
  - [FCDO travel aware Twitter](#) – @FCDOtravelGovUK
  - [FCDO travel advice Facebook](#)
  - [Travel Aware Instagram](#) - @travelaware
- **Travel Aware campaign website**, where we host info on different themes:  
[Travel Aware - Travel Aware](#)
- **GOV.UK:**  
[FCDO Foreign Travel advice](#)





# Thank you!

- Thank you for supporting our campaign. Posts and posts' partners/local stakeholders play an essential role in helping travellers access the information they need to have a safe and enjoyable trip
- If you require our assets in a different size or dimension, please let us know and we will try and accommodate.
- Please email:
  - Sarah Brady ([sarah.brady@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.brady@fcdo.gov.uk))