



Diligence rewarded

AFP officers have been recognised for quickly ending a murderer's attempt to flee from his crime.

Federal Agents Robert Grubisa and Stuart Flynn were patrolling the terminals at Sydney Airport at 3.30pm when they received a phone call from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP).

At 7.50am on 17 March 2014, DIBP authorities had intercepted a 49-year-old Korean male attempting to enter Australia on Korean Air flight KE121 from Seoul. DIBP conducted an entry interview and determined the man was a non-genuine visitor and contacted the AFP.

It was rare that DIBP would involve the AFP in a routine 'turn around'. Usually, the individual would be accommodated overnight, if necessary, and allocated a flight back to their home country.

But this case certainly was out of the ordinary. Korean national, Kwansoo Park, asked to use the bathrooms when first detained by DIBP officers

on his arrival. It was then discovered during interview that he didn't have any money to fund a stay in Australia nor possession of a return ticket to Korea. Mr Park was also evasive about his accommodation and travel in Australia.

When he realised that lack of funds was one of the main reasons he was being turned around he then

made an odd disclosure. He said he had hid a wallet with credit cards behind a toilet in the bathroom.

Federal Agent Grubisa was case officer and says sometimes you just get a hunch that something is not quite right.

"He had a strange mix of clothes on and it looked like he had packed really quickly," Constable Grubisa says. "Also, In South Korea they have an ID card that you have to produce immediately if you are in public, and he had the ID card and credit cards of a young woman. So he had a lot of items that an individual wouldn't readily hand over to another person."

When DIBP officers accompanied Mr Park to the toilet they recovered a blue, lady's wallet with various forms of identification and credit cards in the name of Eunhyoung Jung, born 5 November 1980. There was also a black iPhone. Mr Park had informed DIBP that the wallet belonged to his ex-wife, Ms Jung.

Federal Agent Flynn says it was at this point that DIBP officers contacted the AFP for support.

"There was a wallet and a phone and he said 'this money is mine and these are my partner's credit cards and I can support myself with these'," Federal Agent Flynn says. "But Immigration said 'they are not your cards and we are not giving them back to you'."

Mr Park was issued with a DIBP 'Notice of Intention to Consider Cancellation' and was booked on the next available flight back to Korea at 9am on 18 March. At this time he was considered by DIBP as low risk and would not be accompanied when deported.

"...We just thought we were taking lost property, making phone calls and enquiries – but it allowed them to pick up a guy that had killed his wife."

[Click here to watch an interview with Federal Agent Robert Grubisa](#)

Previous page: Consular-General of Korea in Sydney Whie Jin Lee presents Federal Agent Stuart Flynn (left) and Federal Robert Grubisa (right) with a Certificate of Appreciation for their diligent police work in bringing a murderer to justice.



By 3.40pm, Mr Park was taken to Villawood Detention Centre. Meanwhile, Federal Agents Flynn and Grubisa took possession of Ms Jung's property. While they never had a chance to speak with Mr Park directly they believed the property was stolen and intended to return it to the rightful owner.

The phone was put on charge and at 4pm police received the first call. The officers were greeted by a Korean male who (naturally) was speaking Korean. Using very basic language skills they did, however, convince the speaker to stay on the line.

They then ran up two levels at the airport to a souvenir store where they knew a woman who spoke Korean. From there, the direction of this otherwise routine property job changed for the worse.

It turned out that 34-year-old Ms Jung worked as a hairdresser in Seoul and her manager was on the phone to find out where she was. The young woman hadn't turned up to work for two days and the manager was worried about her.

Through the translator, they confirmed that Mr Park was the young woman's former husband.

Taking the caller's distress as a sign that something more sinister had occurred, the AFP members contacted the Sydney-based Police Attaché Superintendent Gangwon Jo from the Korean National Police Agency (KNPA) at 5.30pm.

Superintendent Jo called back at 8.53pm to inform the AFP that a missing person's investigation had been opened in Korea. AFP operations members confirmed with DIBP that Mr Park would be deported back to Seoul the following morning.

The following morning at about 9.30am, Superintendent Jo called again to confirm whether Park had boarded flight KE122 back to Korea. While police had not yet located Ms Jung, Seoul Police had upgraded the status of the case to a serious criminal matter.

"We rang Immigration again and said 'can you confirm he is on the flight' and they said 'absolutely'."

Unfortunately, about 12.40pm another message informed the AFP that Ms Jung's deceased body had been found at Incheon Airport in Seoul in the boot of a rental car hired by the ex-husband and a full-scale murder investigation was now underway.

At about 1.49pm the AFP Superintendent Operations, Sydney Airport Conrad Jensen informed the Airport Manager for Korean Airlines at Sydney Airport that Mr Park was a potential security risk and that air crew should be advised.

AFP International in Hong Kong was briefed about the matter on the basis of information only, with Seoul police already waiting for Mr Park's arrival.

He was met by the KNPA at Incheon Airport at 5.45pm and charged with murder, to which he confessed to everything.

The story received widespread media attention in Korea. Federal Agents Flynn and Grubisa were unaware of the attention. It was only when speaking to Korean flight attendants over the weeks following that they found out about the media coverage of the murder.

"They were all asking about it – it was front page news in the papers and magazines," he says. "It was just a lucky break. We just thought we were taking lost property, making phone calls and enquiries – but it allowed them to pick up a guy that had killed his wife."

The Korean Government and the KNPA were extremely appreciative of the AFP's timely cooperation in the matter. The Consular General of Korea in Sydney recognised the work of the two AFP members and passed on the gratitude of the Commissioner General of the KNPA.

If the missing person's case had not started when it did, it is likely that the suspect would have tried to flee Korea again shortly after his return to Korea. The investigation highlights the excellent cooperation between the two countries, on top of the satisfaction of bringing a murder suspect before the courts.

Federal Agent Grubisa says it was one of those times when the feeling was that we needed to progress the case quickly.

"It was a bad outcome to the situation but it was a good feeling that we helped to resolve the case quickly," Federal Agent Grubisa says. "It could well have been a case of just stolen property but we felt we had to act quickly and see how it played out."