

DRUG MULES

notes

What is it?

A “mule” is another name for a courier who physically smuggles illegal items across a national border.

How it works

Drug mules are hired to reduce the risk of the organisers being caught. The mule is usually paid a small percentage of the actual profit.

Methods of smuggling include hiding drugs in a vehicle, luggage or clothes; strapping them to the body; or carrying them internally.

Sometimes drugs are hidden in the bag or vehicle of an unaware, innocent person, to be retrieved elsewhere.

How to avoid being a victim

- Always pack your own bag when travelling.
- Do not carry a package for anyone unless you know its contents.

**AN AVERAGE DRUG MULE CAN SWALLOW
BETWEEN 80 AND 125 PELLETS FILLED WITH
DRUGS – A TOTAL OF 800G – 1.25KG**



CASE STUDY: DRUG MULE

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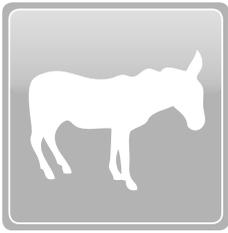
A South African woman was arrested for drug trafficking in another country. During questioning, she mentioned her recruiter and the associated subjects.

The FIC's research revealed frequent and suspicious high cash volume transactions in one of the subject's accounts. Working with the banks, the FIC uncovered additional accounts with frequent large cash deposits locally and withdrawals in other countries.

Money was also deposited into the accounts of young South African women, presumably for drug smuggling. These young women worked in low-paying jobs.

Cheque deposits were also made to supermarkets and cellphone shops, confirming that some of these companies are used as fronts by non-residents to launder and conceal the profits of their criminal activities.

This intelligence helped law enforcement agencies arrest some of the subjects.



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Drug mule suspects: Three South African women in African jails after airport arrests⁸

An excerpt from The Witness

29 December 2011

Three more South African women are in foreign jails for the festive season for allegedly acting as drug mules.

In Nigeria a single mother from South Africa was arrested on Christmas eve for drug smuggling. This after she had reportedly voided her bowels of 55 sealed packets of tik in front of customs officials.

Two other women were arrested in Harare and Maputo.

NAME REMOVED (38) was on her way home to South Africa after she had visited a friend in Malaysia.

In the departure hall of the Murtala Mohammed International Airport in Lagos she started experiencing cramps. Almost collapsing from the pain, she begged that airport security officers get her to a doctor.

A scan confirmed that she had swallowed packets of drugs.

She said she had been persuaded in Malaysia to smuggle 700 grams of crystal methamphetamine, or tik, from Benin, which borders Nigeria.

In a statement she said she had agreed to smuggle the packets of drugs because she hoped that it would ensure a better life for her 19-year-old daughter in South Africa, reports the Daily Sun.

The drugs were delivered to NAME REMOVED's hotel room in Cotonou, Benin....



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Two other South Africans were arrested abroad, allegedly with drugs in their possession, Sapa reports.

NAME REMOVED was arrested on Christmas eve at the Maputo international airport on her way from Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

In Harare a South African woman will appear in court after two kilograms of cocaine were reportedly discovered in her possession at the international airport in the Zimbabwe capital.

She was on her way from South Africa to India when she was arrested on December 15. Four fake passports were allegedly found in her possession. Her friends alleged that she smuggled drugs for a South African drug lord who recruited drug mules from Rosettenville and Turffontein in Johannesburg....