



Humanitarian Mission Services

THE SALVATION ARMY | AUSTRALIA EASTERN TERRITORY | HMS.SALVOS.ORG.AU

Tabled 11 June 2014
by the Salvation Army

10 October, 2013

The Honourable Scott Morrison MP
Member for Cook
Minister for Immigration and Border Protection
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Morrison

WELCOME TO THE IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory Humanitarian Mission Services congratulates the Coalition on its recent victory in the federal election, and welcomes you to the Immigration and Border Protection portfolio.

As we discussed with you on 3rd June earlier this year, The Salvation Army is the contracted humanitarian service provider in Manus Island and Nauru Offshore Processing Centres (OPCs). We also provide contracted services to asylum seekers onshore including community detention for families, unaccompanied minors and vulnerable single adult males.

At Manus Island and Nauru OPCs, our primary responsibility is the care and welfare of all adult asylum seekers. The Salvation Army is fully committed to working closely with the new Government, and your Department to ensure the humanitarian needs of those transferred to Manus Island and Nauru are adequately addressed as they undergo refugee status determination.

Despite our presence in Nauru and Manus Island OPCs, The Salvation Army has consistently expressed its concern about the impact of the policy of offshore processing, particularly on the psychological well-being of asylum seekers.

Whilst The Salvation Army acknowledges the deep complexities and challenges of this portfolio, our strong heritage of advocacy for the most vulnerable and marginalised requires us to raise issues that we believe have the potential to impact peoples' human rights and cause further anguish or psychological damage.

However, we prefer to undertake this advocacy, and raise our concerns, in a respectful manner directly with the Government and Department, rather than through the media or other public forums.

We also undertake to continue to work closely with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, as well as the other contracted service providers, to ensure the highest standard of care is given to those transferred to the OPCs. We have been encouraged by the positive responses of many asylum seekers to our efforts in providing for their care, despite the challenging environments in which these services are delivered.

The Salvation Army strongly believes a humanitarian services organisation is best placed to provide the care and support vulnerable asylum seekers need.

We would welcome an opportunity to meet you again to further discuss our presence and role in the OPCs, and ways in which we could assist in advising on policy relating to asylum seekers and refugees.

Major Kelvin Alley is the national representative to Government for The Salvation Army in Canberra. I know he is well known to you, and will contact your office to discuss if a meeting is possible in the near future, or possibly the new year.

The Salvation Army assures you of our prayers and support for you personally as you undertake your work in this very important and demanding portfolio.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Callister
Chief Executive Officer
Humanitarian Mission Services
The Salvation Army

cc. Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection