

**SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ADDITIONAL BUDGET ESTIMATES  
14 FEBRUARY 2022**

**Home Affairs Portfolio  
Department of Home Affairs**

**Program 2.4: IMA Offshore Management**

**AE22-151 - Papua New Guinea - Closure of offshore processing**

Senator Nick McKim asked:

With the closure of offshore processing at the end of last year (2021), the PNG Government now reportedly has full responsibility for the 124 asylum seekers and refugees who currently remain held in PNG. What assurances has the PNG government provided to ensure these men are well looked after and cared for?

a. How many refugees/people seeking asylum were transferred to Nauru after Australia announced it would close offshore processing in PNG, and after offshore processing in PNG was closed?

*Answer:*

On 1 January 2022, the PNG Government assumed full and independent management of individuals remaining in PNG. The PNG Government will provide a permanent migration pathway in PNG for people who want to make PNG their home and will support individuals pursuing other third country migration options to remain temporarily until they depart.

The PNG Government has implemented a comprehensive settlement framework focused on employment linking and community integration. PNG has engaged a number of experienced service providers, including the Pacific International Hospital, to support the residual caseload remaining in PNG with assistance in accessing secure and sustainable accommodation, welfare and health services, and employment and community linking services to support their settlement journey, whether permanent or temporary.

The residual caseload in PNG has lawful status, work rights, a pathway to citizenship and can pursue family reunion.

a. Eight individuals transferred to Nauru voluntarily from PNG ahead of 31 December 2021 to pursue third country migration outcomes. Transfer after 31 December 2021 is not available.