



17 September 2013

Mr Martin Bowles PSM
Secretary
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
PO Box 25
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

By email:

Dear Mr. Bowles, *Martin*

Request for information: Commission report on the immigration detention and asylum seeker system

Thank you for facilitating a response to my letter of 5 September 2013 requesting the release of departmental statistics with respect to asylum seekers.

While some of the information we have requested has been provided by your officers, other data has been given to us and then hastily withdrawn. Yesterday we were advised that permission to publish some of the key data you had given us has now been denied.

I am writing to you once again to ask that you provide the Commission with all the data we have requested and that you grant permission to publish that data in our 'snap shot' report of the current immigration detention and asylum seeker system. Our aim is to provide the Australian community with an objective and a strictly accurate picture of immigration detention and circumstances faced by asylum seekers and refugees.

As you will be aware, the Commission can make an FOI application to obtain government documents. I would prefer not to use FOI legislation to gain access to information that I believe the public has a right to know. Rather, I would like to continue to work in a collaborative and cooperative way with the Department. I do understand that, in this caretaker period, you might be cautious about sensitive statistics. I trust that, after the new government is sworn in tomorrow, you will be in a position to approve our access to and publication of relevant data.

Please be advised that the report may indicate where the Department did not provide certain information.

As always, I appreciate your work in achieving humane outcomes for asylum seekers, and look forward to working with you in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Triggs
**Gillian Triggs
President**

CC: ahrc.omb@immi.gov.au