

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING : 24 March 2017

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE17/056) - Number of people being held in prison on Manus Island or Nauru - Programme 1.5: IMA Offshore Management

Senator McKim, Nick (L&CA 102) asked:

Senator McKIM: Ms Moy, I think my questions on offshore matters would be in your area. Is the department aware whether there are any people seeking asylum or people who are classified as refugees who are currently being held in prison on Manus Island or Nauru?

Ms Moy: I will ask Acting Deputy Commissioner Woodford-Smith to provide a response.

Mr Woodford-Smith: Right at the moment I am not aware of anyone who is actually in jail. I am aware that from time to time there are certainly people from the centre—transferees, asylum seekers, refugees—who have been imprisoned. But I cannot give you a definitive answer right now as to how many might be jailed at the present time.

Senator McKIM: Could you take that on notice and perhaps if you would go back 12 months for the committee. I am not after names, but would be after reasons and length of sentence, or length of incarceration if it were a remand issue.

Mr Woodford-Smith: We will do the best we can. I just want to caveat it. Because it is the sovereign government of New Guinea or Nauru we do not necessarily get the visibility of that—so it is more ad hoc.

Senator McKIM: I understand that, so I am happy to ask: to the best of the department's knowledge—just stuff that you may have become aware of during discussions with either of those two governments.

Mr Woodford-Smith: Okay.

Answer:

Host governments are not obligated to provide the Department or Service Providers with information relating to incarceration of asylum seekers or refugees. This question is a matter for the Governments of PNG and Nauru.