

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES – 20 OCTOBER 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(SE14/462) PROGRAMME – 2.3 and 2.4: Regional Cooperation

Senator Hanson-Young (Written) asked:

- Mr O'Neill has instructed the preparation of an entirely new resettlement policy, will Australian officials be assisting in the development of the new policy? Will Australia be bearing the brunt of the costs associated with the public awareness and consultation campaign requested by Mr O'Neill? What is the anticipated cost? Will Australian staff/officials be assisting in the development of the policy? Will Australian officials be involved in the public consultation campaign?
- How many asylum seekers have received their initial determination? Is it true that despite this assessment the final decision granting refugee status determination will not be made until there is a policy in place? Therefore refugees will have to remain in detention until a resettlement arrangement is finalised? How long is it anticipated that they will continue to remain in detention?

Answer:

The Papua New Guinea (PNG) national settlement policy is a matter for the Government of PNG. Australian officials will not draft the policy. Australia will support PNG to implement its policy framework, once endorsed by the Government of PNG, consistent with the Regional Resettlement Arrangement.

As at 27 November 2014, 142 transferees at the Manus Offshore Processing Centre had received an initial assessment notification. Under PNG law, final determinations are a matter for the PNG Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration, the Hon Rimbink Pato. As at 27 November 2014, Minister Pato had made 10 final refugee determinations.

The Government of PNG has determined that refugees will initially be accommodated at the East Lorengau Refugee Transit Centre, where they will receive a number of services including:

- basic welfare assistance including a living allowance;
- cultural orientation and language training (English and Tok Pisin);
- access to local health services;
- torture and trauma counselling; and
- case management support to assist refugees as they begin their life in PNG, including finding employment or further training to develop their job readiness.