

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES - 25 FEBRUARY 2014

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

(AE14/036) PROGRAMME – 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Singh (L&CA 53) asked:

Senator SINGH: I just want to go back to Manus Island, Mr Bowles, and what we were talking about earlier with this Amnesty International report the came down in December. I understand that, on receiving the report detailing a range of concerns at Manus Island detention centre, the minister committed to making some improvements, where practicable. This question may be for Senator Cash. Some of the improvements were as practical as ensuring detainees have enough water. Has the government done any of those activities in relation to the recommendations in the Amnesty International report?

Mr Bowles: I cannot speak to the specifics. I do not have the specific detail with me but I am happy to take that on notice and talk about those sorts of issues. We are definitely dealing with any water issues or things like that. That would not be an issue. I am happy to take that on notice and come back to you.

Answer:

The Amnesty International report on the Manus Offshore Processing Centre (OPC) relates to matters for Papua New Guinea (PNG). Any response to the report from the Australian Government will be in collaboration with the Government of PNG. As with other reports provided to the department, the recommendations are under consideration and will be implemented as appropriate.

The department is continuously improving the infrastructure and services within the Manus OPC, in conjunction with the PNG Government. Many of the recommendations in the Amnesty International report have been addressed through these improvements.

Transferees are accommodated in existing and refurbished hard walled accommodation, new temporary dormitory style marquees and some newly constructed buildings. The Manus OPC is equipped with ablutions, laundry facilities, education, recreation and religious observation facilities as well as dedicated medical facilities.

Transferees have unrestricted access to bottled water at all times. Toiletries, clothing and shoes are supplied for each transferee and are replenished as required. Additional toiletries are accessible at the canteen.

All transferees are provided with a programme of recreational activities onsite including music, art, fitness, movie nights and sports such as soccer and volleyball.

Excursions and visits outside the centre have been established. The service providers continue to work closely with local communities and have developed activities and excursions for transferees.