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## Migration Committee to visit Perth

The Joint Standing Committee on Migration will conduct a public hearing in Perth on Thursday 9 October as part of its inquiry into immigration detention. The Committee will take evidence from a number of Western Australia's most prominent community service providers and refugee advocates.

Amongst others, Professor Linda Briskman, co convenor of the People's Inquiry into Immigration Detention, as well as representatives from the Southern Communities Advocacy, Legal and Education Service (SCALES) will appear before the Committee. Both have called for the abolition of mandatory detention and an overhaul of immigration policy.

Chair Michael Danby said, "The hearing in Perth will be an opportunity for the Committee to hear more views on what a contemporary Australian immigration policy should look like. We are particularly interested in how service providers see the ongoing reforms to immigration detention affecting their work."

Under the reforms announced in July by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, people will only be held in detention until health, security and identity checks have been completed. Beyond this, mandatory detention will continue to apply to those people that present an unacceptable risk to the community and to unlawful non citizens who have repeatedly refused to comply with their visa conditions.

In its submission to the committee, SCALES recommend that "further and detailed guidelines need to be provided, as to the meaning of unacceptable risk to the community."

The Committee's terms of reference cover areas of criteria for release from detention, transparency, detention infrastructure and alternatives to options for detention. One of the key areas that the Committee will examine in its first report is the criteria for detention.

"As I see it, the criteria used to assess a person's risk to the community, once the required health and identification checks have been carried out, will impact on the length of time a person will be held in detention," Mr Danby said.

The Committee will also hear from Project SafeCom and Centrecare, and take evidence on a joint submission from the Social Justice Board of the Uniting Church in Australia and others.

Whilst in Perth, the Committee will also visit the Perth Immigration Detention Centre and the Perth Immigration Residential Housing facility.

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Michael Danby MP, on (03) 9534 8126 (electorate office).

**For background information**, including the full terms of reference, please visit the inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/mig/reports.htm> or contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4560 or [jscm@aph.gov.au](mailto:jscm@aph.gov.au).

**Thursday 9 October 2008**

**Public hearing  
for the inquiry into immigration detention**

**Legislative Assembly  
Committee Office Room No. 2  
1/11 Harvest Terrace, West Perth**

| <b>Time</b> | <b>Witness</b>  |
|-------------|---|
| 9:15 am     | SCALES - Southern Communities Advocacy, Legal and Education Service (submission no.103)       |
| 10:00 am    | Mr Stephen Khan<br>(submission no. 26)  |
| 10:30 am    | <i>Morning tea</i>  |
| 10:45 am    | Linda Briskman - Centre for Human Rights Education, Curtin University                         |
| 11:30 am    | Project SafeCom   |
| 11:50 am    | The Social Justice Board of the Uniting Church in Australia and others<br>(submission no. 29) |
| 12:25 pm    | Centrecare Migrant Services   |
| 1:00 pm     | <i>Close</i>  |

Members of the public and media are welcome to attend the hearing. Please note that some sessions prior to morning tea may be conducted in private, and members of the public and media may be asked to leave the room at this time.

The relevant submissions are available on the inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/mig/detention/subs.htm>. For further information please contact the Committee secretariat.