



Immigration Detention Advisory Group

21 July 2008

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Date Received.....	<i>[Signature]</i>

Dr Anna Dacre
Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Department of House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
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CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

RECEIVED
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BY: *MIG*

Dear Dr Dacre

In your letter of 12 June 2008, you invited the Immigration Detention Advisory Group to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration to assist in its Inquiry into immigration detention in Australia. The Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, whom we advise, has encouraged us to do so. Our submission is attached. A copy has been forwarded to the Minister.

As stated in the submission, members of the IDAG are available to explain or expand on any matters we have raised.

Yours sincerely

The Hon John Hodges
Chair
Immigration Detention Advisory Group

Attachment IDAG Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, Inquiry into immigration detention in Australia, July 2008.

Immigration Detention Advisory Group (IDAG)

Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration

The Secretary to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration indicated that the Committee would welcome a submission from the IDAG to its current inquiry into immigration detention in Australia. This has been supported by the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship.

The role of the IDAG is to advise the Minister on matters relating to detention. Any advice we offer on specific issues should be provided through the Minister. Therefore, in constructing this submission, the IDAG has not set out to address directly the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry and thereby make specific recommendations. Instead, we have attempted to give the Committee the benefits of our experience and allow the Committee to form its own judgements.

This submission is set out in the following format:

The IDAG

Who we are

What we have been established to do

What we have done

The knowledge we have acquired and the opinions we have formed

The IDAG - who we are

The IDAG was established in April 2001 to advise the then Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Its terms of reference (TOR), which were expanded in March 2006, are attached as Appendix A.

The membership of the Group has been essentially stable over a number of years. Of the original eight members, one resigned for health reasons in 2003; the other seven members continue to this day. Two new members were appointed in August 2004 and another in May 2006. Biographical information on the members is attached as Appendix B.

The IDAG – what we have been established to do

A feature of the Group's activities over the years has been the wide variety of issues on which the Group's advice has been sought and the wide range of activities in which the Group has been involved. These range well beyond the ambit of the TOR and reflect the value that the Minister and the Department place on the Group's advice and actions.

The IDAG – what we have done

To gain a sound appreciation of where the IDAG has been and what we have done, it is worthwhile outlining the environment in which the Group was created. In April 2001, about 3600 people, almost all of whom were seeking asylum, were being held in immigration detention in six detention facilities. During the next 12 months about 1600 more people arrived by boat, with again almost all of them

seeking Australia's protection. At that time, there was no Immigration Residential Housing (IRH), no Immigration Transit Accommodation (ITA), and essentially no alternative forms of detention. People were held in detention or removed or granted a visa, almost always a Temporary Protection Visa (TPV).

That stands in stark contrast to the detention environment that now exists in Australia. Today, there are fewer than 400 people in detention (in a variety of forms), with only a minority seeking Australia's protection. In conceptional terms, the journey that the IDAG has taken from April 2001 to the present is one that the Joint Parliamentary Committee is now taking. Our expertise was gained over a seven-year period; the Committee has much less time. Our hope is that our description of what we have learned may assist the Committee in its own journey through this complex territory.

At the IDAG's first meeting with the then Minister (Philip Ruddock), he stated that he had formed the Group as a means of obtaining advice that was independent of his own office and Department. Our early activities focussed on visiting detention centres, talking with the people there (those being detained, Departmental officers, detention service officers), and discussing what we had found and what we had learned both within the Group and with Departmental officers. We then reported our findings to the Minister.

Since those early days, our focus has shifted as the detention environment has changed and the numbers of people in detention has decreased markedly. (Attached as Appendix C is a graph depicting the numbers of people in detention from 1999 to the present.) This is not to say that we regard our role of visiting detention facilities as being less important but rather that the number of facilities is much less, the number of people in detention are far fewer, and many of the issues that attracted our attention and criticism have been resolved. However, today, our attention is directed much more at assisting in the development of structures and processes that give effect to the Government's directions in this important area of public policy.

This is not to diminish the importance that the Group places on visits. They continue, with special emphasis being placed on the Villawood IDC. Our three Sydney-based members, Loreto Conroy, Mohammed Alsalami and Warren Glenny, are regular visitors, reporting their findings to the Group as a whole.

Over the last seven plus years, we have met regularly with the Minister. We have also sought and obtained approval to meet with shadow Ministers and other Members of Parliament with an interest in our areas of activities. We have had a number of meetings with the Commonwealth Ombudsman, the Commissioner for Human Rights and Equal Opportunity, and the local representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The other people and groups with whom we have interacted range widely, from the Regional Advisor for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and those conducting important inquiries (Palmer, Comrie, Roche) to ordinary Australian citizens with interests and concerns on the issue of immigration detention.

Some of the areas in which the Group has played a substantial role are as follows:

- Health

- Mental health (special emphasis on victims of torture and trauma)

- Case management

Alternative forms of detention

Community care

Management of detention centres

Stakeholder engagement

Community consultative groups

Research

Training of Detention Service Officers

IDAG involvement in specific activities

IDAG representation on Departmental committees

Health. Health in general and mental health in particular have been critical issues for the IDAG and have generated considerable debate and criticism of detention policy. The IDAG is of the view that the mental health of people held in immigration detention for long periods of time will, in virtually every case, deteriorate markedly. In the first six months of its operation, the IDAG prepared a paper recommending the establishment of an additional advisory structure in the area of health and mental health services. The proposal was accepted by Minister Ruddock, however, actual implementation by the Department was extremely slow. Eventually, and after constant pressure from the Group, the Detention Health Advisory Group (DeHAG) was established in 2006 with an IDAG member, Professor Harry Minas, as its Chairman. The DeHAG has performed splendidly over the last two plus years and contributed to major improvements in its areas of activity.

Case Management – alternative forms of detention. In 2002, the Group undertook a major study into case management and alternative forms of detention leading to recommendations being put to the Minister in January 2003. From that, the current systems of case management and community care were developed. The IDAG continues to provide input into the ongoing development of these programs as they relate to detention matters.

Management of detention centres. From experience gained through visits to detention facilities, the Group was concerned about the arrangements for the management of detention centres. Of particular concern was the fact that the Department had little direct control of the day-to-day activities in the centres. This was evident in a number of areas and can be illustrated in an area in which the IDAG took considerable interest, namely, excursions. The Group strongly believed that, for people in detention, excursions outside the centre for a variety of purposes (religious, recreational, shopping *et al*) were of great benefit to their well-being and state of mind. However, the efforts of the IDAG and local Departmental staff were consistently frustrated by the local representatives of the Detention Services Provider (DSP) using the terms of the Detention Services contract to do so.

Over a long period, the IDAG brought this issue to the attention of the Minister and senior officers of the Department. In 2006, a committee was established to consider the matter of management of detention centres. It was from the strong and consistent pressure exerted by the two IDAG representatives on that committee that a new Detention Centre Management Model was devised that gives the ultimate on-site authority to the DIAC Centre Executive. He who paid the piper was at last calling the tune.

An associated issue was that of whether the operation of detention centres should be returned to the public sector. The Group considered this at some length over a long period. We could see the value of public-sector operation mainly because we could also see the frustration experienced by on-site Departmental staff in having their views receive less than appropriate weight in centre operations. With the new centre management model, this has been overcome; control of the centres is now in its proper place.

In a broad sense, the provision of specific services can be contracted or delegated to those who are able to provide them in an effective and cost-effective way, be those providers in the public or private sectors. Having seen the operations of the current Centre Management Model over the last two years, the IDAG supports its continuation.

Stakeholder Engagement. The IDAG has also been active in interacting with individuals and groups that have particular concerns in our areas of activity. We have met with many non-government organisations (NGOs) and a wide variety of individuals. We have done this both to obtain their views and to offer our own, especially those that have come from our own activities and our direct involvement with individuals who range from Ministers and senior officials to those being held in detention.

IDAG members have also facilitated meetings between senior Departmental officers, ministerial staff and the non-government sector in order to promote constructive engagement and dialogue about detention issues. In doing so, the IDAG has been able to play a bridging role at times when the environment was frequently characterised by acrimony and division.

In recent times, we have set up specific meetings with stakeholders in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Darwin. These will be repeated. We have found all of these meetings to be beneficial and the feedback we have obtained from participants has been most positive.

Community Consultative Groups (CCGs). CCGs have been formed in a number of places for the purpose of interacting with individuals and groups located in the vicinity of detention facilities. Groups such as these had been in operation for some time. However, by the time that the IDAG directed its attention to them in late 2005, they were essentially moribund. Most had not convened for years and those that had were ineffective. In conjunction with officers of the Department, the IDAG reinvigorated the CCGs. Groups, chaired by IDAG members, now meet in Brisbane, Sydney (Villawood), Melbourne (Maribyrnong), Adelaide, Perth, Darwin and Christmas Island.

As the new arrangements were bedded in, meetings were held frequently (in some cases, bi-monthly). Now that they are firmly established, the frequency has been reduced for most CCGs. The exception is the Villawood CCG, which is an acknowledgement of the importance of the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre (VIDC).

Research. Another issue on which the IDAG has focused its attention from its inception is that of research. From the beginning, we could see and sense that most views on immigration detention were based on little solid evidence. If sound policy was to be developed and put in place, a rigorous and vigorous program of research was needed. The incubation period of this particular interest of the IDAG has been long but the egg is about to hatch and a structure and process will soon be in place with the IDAG playing a central role.

Training of Detention Service Officers. From its beginnings the IDAG recognised the fundamental importance of the training provided by successive Detention Services Providers (DSPs) to their officers. IDAG members have been involved in many of the DSPs' courses either as observers or lecturers. We have emphasised such issues as cultural sensitivity, personal dignity and managing people who are especially vulnerable.

IDAG involvement in specific activities. The Minister and/or the Department have called on the IDAG on numerous occasions to assist with specific activities. Some of particular note have been the settlement of the hunger strike at the Woomera Immigration Detention Centre in January 2002 and a number of incidents at the VIDC, in particular, the movement of people from the VIDC to the Holdsworthy Army Camp and back to the VIDC in 2006.

IDAG representation on Departmental committees. Throughout its operation, the IDAG has participated on a number of Departmental committees. Some of these have been mentioned earlier in this submission. At present the Group is represented on the following committees:

Detention Health Advisory Group (DeHAG)

Detention Services Tender Steering Committee (DSTSC)

Health Services Delivery Group (HSDG)

Community Care Pilot Reference Group (CCPRG)

The IDAG - the knowledge we have acquired and the opinions we have formed

The foregoing has been offered by way of background. The IDAG has been and continues to be active, involved and influential. The area in which we are involved is of serious concern to the Australian people and has been the subject of considerable public comment for a number of years. We are most conscious of that and of the potential for disagreement and contention. Our aim is not to provoke further disagreement and contention but to offer views that may clarify, perhaps even settle, some issues and help create an environment in which good people working together can deliver good outcomes for all.

The starting point for any reasonable discussion of immigration detention must be to establish the reasons why we need to detain people. In the world of today, the twin notions of sovereignty and citizenship interact with vast world-wide disparities in socio-economic circumstances to force nations to control their borders. To do otherwise is to expose your nation to activities and influences that could undermine its existence in the form preferred by its citizens.

Australia, like almost all other nations, requires people who are not Australian citizens to obtain permission to enter. If a person tries to enter without permission, Australia limits that person's access to the nation and its benefits until a determination is made. That determination takes numerous forms depending on circumstances. One of those forms is immigration detention.

In fact, there are a number of ways in which people can enter detention and there are now a number of forms in which they can be detained. The Committee would be well aware of these and it is not the intention of the IDAG to describe these or to canvass the issues that arise. We will direct our attention to the broader issues.

The IDAG strongly supports the current Departmental position that to place a person in a detention centre is the option of last resort. The circumstances must be serious before we as a nation deprive a person of his or her liberty. Nevertheless, even though they are infrequent, those circumstances do arise. The most difficult of these to manage is when a person seeks protection from Australia as a refugee.

Mandatory detention. The IDAG strongly supports the position of successive Australian governments that, before those seeking access to Australia enter the community, they must establish their identity, their background and their health. This raises the subject of mandatory detention. Views on this subject vary markedly and, in general, are very strongly held. Some regard it as a serious blot on our national escutcheon, others as a policy that is essential to our security. The IDAG supports the concept but not the term. We believe that the emphasis should be on how and in what form the policy is applied, particularly with regard to ensuring timely, fair, reasonable and humane resolution of cases. This is discussed further in later sections; however, the IDAG encourages the Committee to seek some more appropriate descriptor of this plank of national policy. To do so would be to provide a much better base on which to place the discussion of this important issue.

As part of that clarification, an important point on which to focus attention is that detention is a legal status that does not imply a place or form of detention. Detention has many variations depending on the specific characteristics of the person being detained.

Principles – dignity, fairness, humanity. Having placed a person in administrative detention, Australia must, as a matter of national principle, treat that person with dignity, fairness and humanity. One immediate outcome of that precept is to hold that person for the minimum time. That requires that the establishing of identity, background and health be done as quickly as practicable. If doing so is difficult – and that could be for many different reasons – important questions arise, namely, for how long and in what form should the person be detained?

Questions such as these are often addressed by requiring the determination to be made within a specified timeframe, eg, 90 days, otherwise a fresh determination must be made. This is not satisfactory. It raises other questions. For example - and the data for this should be available - how many background checks that could not be made in 30 days were made inside 90 days? The answer is important. Being held in a detention centre for any period of time is a major imposition on anyone; 30 days is a long time; 90 days must seem like forever. But then, to be held indefinitely, which is a fate to which some people have been subjected in Australia, surely stretches human endurance to its very limits. Equally important is that it in no way accords with Australia's national principles of dignity, fairness and humanity.

Risk – analysis, assessment, management. Releasing people who are seeking asylum into the Australian community raises another issue of fundamental concern, namely, risk; how do we analyse and assess risk and then how do we manage it?

The IDAG has noted over the years that both the Department and successive Detention Services Providers are risk-averse. Although this is understandable given the nature of the work in which they are engaged, we believe that it frequently results in less than satisfactory outcomes. Underlying this appears to be the feeling that releasing people from detention into the Australian community creates significant risks for the community at large. The facts indicate otherwise. The IDAG knows of no case

in which a person who has escaped from a detention centre or has absconded from other forms of detention has created any major problems for the community at large.

For example, in a period of three days in 2001, 46 people being held in detention at Villawood escaped. Some have since been found, most have not, none caused a problem and no threat to the Australian public eventuated. In another instance in July 2001, a number of people escaped in a mass break-out from the Woomera Detention Centre with similar results. These instances hardly indicate that the public at large should be concerned; rather the opposite. Of course, if there were but one instance of an escapee or absconder committing a major crime, the public outcry would be certain and would be loud. The only effective response in those circumstances requires constancy, confidence, leadership and determination of the highest order, at the highest levels.

Centre security. An associated issue is that of how to secure our detention centres. The contrast here is between physical security and dynamic security. Physical security emphasises such things as high fences, razor wire, and constant surveillance. Dynamic security is otherwise. The best way of contrasting the different approaches is by focussing on the behaviour of detention officers. Those who emphasise physical security sit and observe; those who emphasise dynamic security walk and talk.

This was illustrated boldly to the IDAG in its many visits to the Baxter IDC (now closed) outside Port Augusta in South Australia. Officers of the Detention Services Provider (DSP) would sit in their offices looking out on the compound in which they worked. They were supported by other DSP staff who monitored closed circuit television (CCTV) screens and electronic barriers. In contrast, senior personnel of the on-site Departmental staff were constantly interacting with the people in detention, taking tea or coffee with them, talking with them, sharing a difficult experience. It is obvious which system of security better acknowledged the dignity and humanity of the people being detained. Moreover, when it came to determining the mood, morale and attitudes of those people, there was no doubt as to which officers had the better understanding and the better information.

Case Management. The subject of case management has been raised above. The IDAG has consistently emphasised it as a matter of importance in the management of people in detention. Most important of all is to be open and honest with these people and provide them from the very start of their detention with information that is appropriate, accurate and realistic. The last aspect is fundamental. People must be made aware of the possible outcomes of their case and be continually reminded of the outcomes that are realistically possible. Experience over many years has shown that, in those cases in which the granting of protection is of low probability, realistic counselling is the best means of convincing people to depart voluntarily.

Case management is also extremely important in helping people in detention through a difficult period in their lives. The development of rapport with a sympathetic, knowledgeable and realistic case manager assists greatly in boosting the morale of people in detention and in enhancing the capacity of the person to make informed and realistic decisions about appropriate courses of action. It is another area in which recent changes in approach and attitude have been beneficial to all.

Alternative forms of detention. Another area in which recent approaches have been highly beneficial is the development and use of alternative forms of detention. These include accommodation in Immigration Residential Housing (IRH) and community detention. These have provided more appropriate means of detaining people while they are awaiting an immigration determination.

Community Care Pilot. One means by which alternative models for achieving timely resolution in cases of vulnerable asylum seekers who would have either been held in detention or been residing in the community with little support (and at risk of detention in the future) has been the Community Care Pilot. This commenced in 2006 and continues as a pilot scheme. Its objectives are worth consideration. They are to:

ensure that clients are managed in a timely, fair and reasonable manner while their immigration outcomes are being determined

provide wellbeing support to clients with exceptional circumstances

support individuals to make informed choices about their immigration status and thereby achieve more timely immigration outcomes

test the arrangements under which clients are referred by Departmental case managers to services provided by the Australian Red Cross (ARC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) or through the Immigration Advice and Application Assistance Scheme (IAAAS)

The exceptional circumstances mentioned in the objectives refer to people who, for a variety of reasons, are assessed as vulnerable.

As a set of objectives they would seem to apply across the broad range of detention. An initial evaluation indicated that the Community Care Pilot is achieving:

a more timely, fair, just and caring model for resolving complex and vulnerable cases;

higher rates of voluntary departures of individuals than has been achieved through immigration detention with individuals with similar vulnerabilities and conditions;

highly effective collaboration among government, non-government and inter-governmental (IOM) agencies in the management of asylum cases;

a more cost-effective system of resolving such cases than placing them in immigration detention.

The IDAG considers the Pilot to be a great success and we support its conversion from pilot to program. This would have the additional virtue of increasing opportunities for managing people awaiting immigration outcomes in community settings.

The Department and its officers. The IDAG has always been very well supported by the Department and its officers. We have noted the criticism directed at the Department and the way in which its officers have been portrayed in the media. We would like to offer a corrective to that popular view. The IDAG has found that the great majority of officers are dedicated, hard-working and highly conscious of the importance and sensitivity of the work in which they are engaged. This is not to say that, on occasions, criticism has not been warranted and, where it has, the IDAG has not been reluctant to focus its attention there.

On a similar subject, the IDAG has found that the employees of the successive DSPs have also often been unjustly criticised. Again, in many instances, criticism has been warranted and the IDAG through its inspections and its interactions with DSP officers has frequently highlighted shortcomings and

inappropriate behaviour. These, however, have been the exceptions. Most detention service officers are ordinary Australian citizens doing a difficult job with dedication and humanity.

One of the ways in which the public perception of detention and its management has been distorted in the popular press is through the penchant of journalists (and others) to accept that anything said by a person in detention is true, whereas anything said by a Departmental or DSP officer is automatically suspect. The truth is otherwise. The IDAG has found that, in a very human way, all parties involved in the detention environment tend to describe actions and events in a way that portrays them and their actions in a more favourable light. Those seeking the objective truth must factor this tendency into their intellectual apparatus and endeavour to make appropriate compensation.

One of the outcomes that the IDAG hopes will come from this inquiry is that the Australian people will be given a true picture of detention in its many forms and the attitudes and actions of both the people who are being detained and the Australian people who work with them.

A corollary of this is to provide the public with a realistic picture of detention today.

The view of many members of the public was formed some years ago by events such as the constant arrival of leaking boats in our northern waters, 'children overboard', 'SIEV X', 'Tampa', the 'Pacific Solution', the Woomera hunger strike, citizen protests, and thousands of people seeking asylum being held in inappropriate, highly secure accommodation. The reality of today is vastly different, but the public view has not shifted nearly so far. The IDAG considers that informing the public that:

few people are now being held in detention centres,

many other forms of detention are now being used,

detention accommodation has been greatly improved,

few people now in detention are seeking asylum,

the majority of asylum seekers arrive in Australia with a valid visa and live in the community while they pursue their claims (The numbers here are significant. As of 4 July 2008, of some 2160 initial protection visa applicants, some 2110 were in the community and only 50 in detention.),

many people in detention centres are convicted criminals awaiting deportation, and

in recent times, the largest group in detention has been illegal foreign fishers (IFFs) who generally spend less than 14 days in detention,

would help greatly in informing the Australian people of what is being done on their behalf.

Villawood IDC. Notwithstanding the above, one aspect of current detention that deserves critical comment is the condition of our largest and most important detention centre, that at Villawood in western Sydney. It does not accord with what the IDAG considers is appropriate for people held in detention. The IDAG is of course aware of the plans for improvements at Villawood. However, we would contend that the timeframe set for the project (which is an outcome of the funds being made available in successive budgets) needs to be revised and shortened.

The Migration Act – its size and its complexities. Migration is a large and complex issue for the making of public policy. The legislation and regulations that cover it are themselves large and complex. A feature of such areas in public policy-making is that the documentation that covers those areas continually increases in size and complexity as new issues arise requiring new policies, procedures and programs. Perhaps it is too much to hope for but, as a body that continues to maintain hope in this complex area, the IDAG is hopeful that an outcome of the current inquiry might be to initiate action for a comprehensive review of the Migration Act and associated documentation.

The dangers of being overly prescriptive. One final issue that the IDAG wishes to bring to the Committee's attention is the danger of being overly prescriptive in a policy area that is complex and ever-changing. This can lead to less than optimum outcomes. For example, if a person in authority makes a public statement such as 'no one will be held in Immigration Transit Accommodation for more than seven days', he or she establishes a restriction that could force someone from an ITA into, say, a detention centre when a 24-hour extension at the ITA would see the case resolved. In similar fashion, categorical statements about the detention of families or minors, or the setting of rigid time-scales in which to take action can also preclude actions that would otherwise be highly beneficial for the person or people being detained.

Conclusion

This submission has ranged widely across the area of immigration detention. The Committee, being now well into its work in this inquiry, would appreciate fully why this is so. What is put before you is a description of the IDAG's activities over a significant period of time and of the opinions that we, as a group, have formed.

If the Committee should request that representatives of the IDAG appear before it to explain or expand on this submission, we would be delighted to do so. The sole proviso is that the Minister's approval be sought.

Along a similar line, members of the IDAG could be made available to accompany the Committee on its visits to detention facilities. This has already occurred at the VIDC where Loreto Conroy and Warren Glenny worked with the Committee and its staff.

Finally, the IDAG encourages the Committee in this very important area of public policy. Australia has a wonderful record in the area of migration, a record that has been somewhat distorted by the way in which immigration detention has been managed and publicly portrayed in the recent past. The Committee has a great opportunity to ensure that the Australian community is well informed about the current operation of an important area of immigration policy and practice and to provide its views on how we as a nation and a people ought to manage those whom we detain.

(John C. Hodges)
Chairman
Immigration Detention Advisory Group

21 July 2008

Appendices

- A. Immigration Detention Advisory Group – Terms of Reference (revised March 2006)
- B. IDAG Members Bioinformation
- C. Numbers of People in Immigration Detention – December 1999 – June 2008

IMMIGRATION DETENTION ADVISORY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Immigration Detention Advisory Group (IDAG) will:

- advise the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship on matters relating to the detention of unlawful non-citizens in Immigration Detention Centres (IDCs), alternative and community detention arrangements. In particular, the Group will:
 - advise on the appropriateness and adequacy of:
 - detention services provided to detainees at IDCs;
 - IDC accommodation and amenities; and
 - community detention intervention arrangements;
 - contribute to the enhancement of detention program strategies; and
 - contribute to departmental detention program consultative processes.

In addressing these issues, IDAG will:

- either individually or collectively, visit each IDC at least once a year to obtain first hand information on the operation of and environment at each centre;
- either individually or collectively liaise with non-government organisations and the community on a regular basis to obtain first hand information on issues faced by detainees accommodated in the community under detention intervention arrangements; and
- develop a work program, agreed with the Minister, identifying priority issues to be addressed over the next twelve months, noting that, from time to time, the Minister may task IDAG to examine and advise on a particular issue or issues.

* The IDAG Terms of Reference were revised in March 2006 under the previous government.

IDAG Members Bioinformation

The IDAG consists of prominent and respected Australians selected for their expertise and demonstrated commitment to immigration and humanitarian issues.

The Hon John Hodges (Chair) *(appointed IDAG Chair, 27 February 2001)*

The IDAG is chaired by the Hon John Hodges, who has had a political career with the Liberal Party spanning more than 30 years, during which time he served as the Federal Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1982-83).

He has had a long association with migration issues, notably as

- a foundation member of the Migration Institute of Australia;
- a member of the Reference Group on the move to Statutory Self Regulation of the Migration Industry (1997);
- Chair of the External Reference Group on Independent and Skilled Australian Linked Points Tested Migration Categories (1998); and
- member of the External Reference Group on Statutory Self Regulation (1999).

As a registered pharmacist, he has been a pharmacy owner (with his wife, Margaret) for more than 35 years. For nine years he operated the John Hodges & Associates, Migration Consultancy (1987 to 1996).

Dr Mohammed Taha Alsalami *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

Dr Alsalami is the Chair of the Organisation of Human Rights in Iraq and a prominent leader in Sydney's Muslim community. He is also Chair of a local Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS) group and is involved in a number of Muslim community and cultural groups in New South Wales. Dr Alsalami is a former member of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council (RRAC).

Mr Paris Aristotle AM *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

Mr Paris Aristotle AM is the Director of The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc. He has been actively involved in a number of organisations and government committees dealing with refugees and issues relating to rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors.

Mr Aristotle is currently an executive member of the International Society for Health and Human Rights. He is also a co-convenor of the National Forum of Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma, and a former member of the Australian Refugee Council and the Settlement Advisory Council. He has been a member of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council (RRAC) since 1997.

Air Marshal Ray Funnell AC (Retd) *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

Air Marshal Ray Funnell joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) as an officer cadet in 1953 and served until 1992, the last five years as Chief of the Air Staff.

He brought into being Australia's own strategic-level college, of which he was Principal from 1994-98. He retired from public service in January 1999. During 1999 he was a member of the External Reference Group on People Smuggling.

Air Marshal Funnell is a graduate of RAAF College, RAAF Staff College, the United States Air Force War College and the Royal College of Defence Studies. He holds a Masters Degree in Political Science and a Graduate Diploma of Administration. He has written and lectured widely on defence and security issues.

Major General Warren Glenny AO RFD ED (Retd) *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

Major General Warren Glenny AO RFD ED (Retd) is a former Chair of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council. He is a former Chief Executive Officer of AUSTCARE, a non-government organisation undertaking assistance to refugees and displaced persons overseas. He is also a former General Manager with Coles Myer having commenced with Fosseys in 1968.

The Major General has a distinguished career in the Army Reserve spanning more than 40 years. He commenced as a cadet with the Royal New South Wales Lancers and retired in 1994 as Major General commanding the Reserve 2nd Division. During his Reserve service he spent time in the United Kingdom, Germany, South Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, Malaya and Indonesia.

The Hon Gerry Hand *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

The Hon Gerry Hand was a Member of Federal Parliament for 10 years, during which time he served as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (1987-90) and Minister for Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs (1990-93).

Mr Hand has long been interested in refugee and related issues and recently represented Australia at a round-table meeting called by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of Thailand to discuss refugee issues in Thailand. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the United States, Europe, Thailand and Cambodia. In the past he has undertaken visits to refugee camps in Africa, Europe, and South-East Asia.

Professor Harry Minas *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001)*

Professor Harry Minas is Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne's Department of Psychiatry. He is the Director of the Centre for International Mental Health and the Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit at the University of Melbourne, executive member of the Board of the Mental Health Council of Australia, Chair of the Council's Research, Projects and Policy Committee and is also a member of the International Advisory Council of the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Professor Minas has had a long-standing interest and involvement in immigrant and refugee mental health issues, and in the human rights of immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Ms Ellen Goodman *(appointed IDAG member, 27 February 2001- resigned 16 September 2003)*

Ms Goodman was a part time member of the Migration Review Tribunal; a member of the Refugee Resettlement Advisory Council; extensively involved in committees examining anti-discrimination and ethical issues; and a former senior lecturer in law at Macquarie University.

The Hon Margaret Reid AO (*appointed IDAG member, 10 August 2004*)

The Hon Margaret Reid AO has had a long and distinguished career in politics. She was elected as representative of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) in the Senate from May 1981 prior to retirement mid-way through her 2001 term. During her time as Senator for the ACT, Ms Reid was Deputy President of the Senate and Chair of Committees from 1995 to 1996 and also served as President of the Senate from 1996 to 2002.

Ms Reid was instrumental in many achievements during her career as representative of the ACT in the Senate. These include:

- the development of the National Museum of Australia;
- the upgrade of the Canberra Airport to international status;
- the redevelopment of the National Film and Sound Archive;
- upgrades to the Australian War Memorial and Old Parliament House; and
- the development of a new Russell Office complex.

Sister Loreto Conroy (*appointed IDAG member, 10 August 2004*)

Sister Loreto Conroy, a North Sydney Sister of Mercy, served six years as Chair of the Mercy Foundation, resigning in April 2004. She has long been associated with global migration and humanitarian issues. During the period 1990 to 1993, Sister Conroy, through secondment to the UNHCR, was responsible for some 2000 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) in a Vietnamese refugee camp. During this time she also assisted in the voluntary repatriation program for UAMs.

Sister Conroy's involvement with migration and humanitarian issues is also evidenced through her involvement in the NSW Ecumenical Council with resettlement of refugees issues (1993), religious service position at Villawood IDC (1993), as Manager of the Refugee Program for the National Council of Churches Australia (1996) and as a member of the Inter-Government Committee for Non-Government Organisations (1996).

Sister Conroy continues to be involved in a voluntary and educative way in matters relating to refugee, asylum and immigration detention issues.

Mr Tsebin Tchen (*appointed IDAG member, 31 May 2006*)

Mr Tchen served in the Australian Parliament as a senator for Victoria from 1999 to 2005. During his term he served on a number of Parliamentary and Senate Committees, including the Joint Standing Committee on Migration, and the Senate Standing Regulations and Ordinances Committee, which he chaired between 2002 and 2005. He also chaired the Government Members' Policy Committee on Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs between 2000 and 2004.

Mr Tchen is an urban and regional planner by profession with more than 30 years of experience working in strategic and statutory planning with a number of State and local government agencies in New South Wales and Victoria. He was a member for the Victorian Anti-Discrimination Tribunal from 1995 to 1998.

Before entering politics, Mr Tchen was actively involved in Victoria's Chinese and multicultural community, and has served as an elected member of the Executive Committee of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria.

Appendix C

Numbers of People in Immigration Detention December 1989 - June 2008

