



Joint Migration Committee tables second report into immigration detention

The Joint Standing Committee on Migration has recommended the Australian government utilise a reformed bridging visa framework in lieu of community detention until a person's immigration status is resolved in its report tabled last night.

Chair of the Migration Committee, Mr Michael Danby, said that the Committee recognised early on in its inquiry that a new approach to immigration detention was needed. An approach that supports people who lawfully come to Australia as well as those who have fled their native lands seeking asylum; invests in case management; and actively seeks an expected immigration outcome.

“Our first report recognised the need for some form of secure detention. However, the committee established that where an individual was seen to be a genuine asylum seeker, prolonged detention was unacceptable,” Mr Danby said.

“In our second report, we have looked at the practicality of releasing people from immigration detention.”

In forming its recommendations, the Committee drew on the evidence it received as well as looking at international approaches to immigration detention.

“We have made recommendations that not only uphold the security and safety of Australia's people and its borders, but also takes a humane approach to people that are seeking our protection,” Mr Danby said.

The Committee acknowledges that there are basic rights, such as access to appropriate health care, housing and income that should be afforded to all people regardless of their immigration status.

“The series of recommendations the Committee has made will build on the new immigration detention values and strike a fair balance between protecting the Australian community and meeting our obligations to people coming to Australia and the expectations of the international community of which we are an integral part”, he said.

The report is the second in a series of three on immigration detention. The Committee is expected to release the third report of its inquiry into immigration detention later this year. That report will address the remaining terms of reference which consider service provision and the infrastructure required to support the immigration detention framework for the future.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Michael Danby MP, on (02) 6277 4520, or the Deputy Chair, Hon Danna Vale MP, on (02) 6277 4866.

For the full report and background information, 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.