

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### BUDGET ESTIMATES – 26 – 27 MAY 2014

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### **(BE14/079) PROGRAMME – 2.1 and 2.2: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance**

Senator Xenophon (L&CA 40) asked:

Senator XENOPHON: It might be that I need to take it further with FOI. Given the nature of the agreement with Papua New Guinea in respect of asylum seekers, do we know what happened to these seven West Papuans? Do we know of their fate?

Mr Bowles: I have not been engaged with this, for quite a while. The last I heard they were being assessed by UNHCR. I think, from memory, one of them was proven to be a PNG person as opposed to a West Papuan, as well. There was quite a confused picture at the time with that, and it was later determined that at least one of them was a PNG citizen—as opposed to a West Papuan, as was claimed.

Senator XENOPHON: If you could take that on notice I would be very grateful.

*Answer:*

The adult female member of the group was identified as a Papua New Guinea (PNG) citizen and returned to her home town in PNG.

The remaining six of the seven group members were transferred to East Awin Relocation Centre in Western Province, which is a gazetted centre from which claims for protection and regularisation of status of Indonesians identifying as West Papuans may be progressed.