

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARINGS: 11 February 2013

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(AE13/0435) PROGRAM – 4.3: Offshore Asylum Seeker Management

Senator Cash (Written) asked:

What measures were taken to prevent future escapes on both Nauru and Manus Island?

Answer:

All adult transferees to the Regional Processing Centres (RPCs) on Nauru and Manus Island (Papua New Guinea) are informed of their obligations during the reception and induction stage of their arrival at the RPC. The established practices surrounding access control, including entry and exit from the site, and the need to be escorted when outside the facility are clearly articulated with the assistance of interpreters and translated written material. Transferees are advised that any misbehavior on Nauru or Manus will affect their prospects for resettlement.

Manus Island Regional Processing Centre

On Manus Island, absconder incidents are primarily addressed with behavioural measures. Transferees are advised of the risks that they take with both the environmental elements and the local population should they decide to abscond.

In cases where transferees continually abscond the individual circumstances of the transferee are discussed by all service providers, and triggers of their behaviour and multi-agency plans for managing behaviour are developed.

Security posts have been relocated and security staffing numbers increased as required.

The Papua New Guinea (PNG) government has advised all transferees that the PNG Police will be mobilised as required to enforce PNG law, (including PNG migration law) to prevent transferees from absconding from the Centre. Where the PNG Police believe that a transferee has broken PNG law, charges are laid.

Nauru Regional Processing Centre

On Nauru, absconder incidents have been addressed through a number of measures. The height of the fencing around the construction zone has been increased to delay any transferees attempting to scale the fence. Further, a number of security posts were relocated and the number of officers around the construction zone increased to enable the detection of breaches.

Transferees are subject to the Nauruan laws and judicial system. The engagement of the local Nauruan police force occurs when a transferee absconds from the Centre.