

## QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

### SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 19 November 2013

#### IMMIGRATION AND BORDER PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

#### (SE13/0361) PROGRAM – 4.3: Offshore Asylum-Seeker Management

Senator Carr (Written) asked:

Has refugee status determination commenced for people on Nauru and Manus Island? How many people have applied for refugee status? How many people have been found to be a refugee? What will happen to them? How many have been found not to be a refugee? What is the average processing time to undertake a refugee status determination? How many staff are involved in undertaking a refugee status determination? How many staff from DIBP? How many from Nauru/PNG? What support is DIBP providing to the Nauruan and PNG governments to assist with refugee status determination processes?

*Answer:*

The Government of Nauru commenced its Refugee Status Determination (RSD) process on 19 March 2013. The Government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) commenced its Refugee Determination (RD) process on 8 July 2013.

Most persons transferred to Nauru and Manus prior to 19 July 2013 have been transferred back to Australia and their PNG RD or Nauru RSD process ceased.

Of the persons transferred to Nauru and Manus post 19 July 2013, as at 15 November 2013, 28 transferees on Nauru and 152 transferees on Manus Island have had individual protection claim advice and assistance to lodge a protection claim.

On 14 August 2013, the Government of Nauru found one pre 19 July transferee to be owed protection. The individual has since been transferred back to Australia and is currently situated in Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA). The Government of PNG has not made a decision on any applications for refugee status.

Transferees in Nauru that are found to be owed Nauru's protection will be temporarily settled in Nauru pending finalisation of a third country resettlement option. Transferees that are not owed Nauru's protection are expected to be removed from Nauru as per the powers of the Nauru Immigration Act 1999.

Transferees in PNG that are found to be owed PNG's protection will be settled in PNG or any other participating regional, including Pacific Island, state. Transferees that are not owed PNG's protection are expected to be removed from PNG as per the powers of the PNG *Migration Act 1978*.

RSD processing times and RSD staffing arrangements are a matter for the respective Governments of Nauru and PNG.

The Government of Australia, through the department, provides a package of assistance to the Governments of Nauru and PNG to build their capacity to assess protection claims. The capacity building model includes Australia's assistance to assess claims on behalf of the Governments of Nauru and PNG and the provision of local support and guidance, through a mentor model. Taskforces of up to 10 DIBP officers are deployed to Nauru and PNG progressively to provide this assistance.