



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship



SECRETARY

17 March 2010

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Dr Dermody

Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Torres Strait

Thank you for the opportunity provided to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to appear before the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Torres Strait on 17 December 2009. Some questions were raised through the course of the hearing, which were taken on notice. Please find attached answers to those questions.

Yours sincerely

(Andrew Metcalfe)



QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

INQUIRY INTO MATTERS RELATING TO TORRES STRAIT- DECEMBER 2009

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

In relation to working hours for the Movement Monitoring Officers in the Torres Strait, Senator Kroger enquired,

- 1) What are they generally – nine to five?

Answer:

- 1) Movement Monitoring Officers (MMOs) are employed under the Department Initiated Variable Working Hour (DIVWH) policy which allows a flexible response to arrivals and departures outside of standard hours. A copy of the current work schedule for the MMOs is at Attachment A.

In relation to the health clinics in the Torres Strait, Senator Kroger enquired,

- 1) Is there a health clinic near each of the designated arrival points?
- 2) Who is responsible for transporting a person to a clinic if it is on another island?
- 3) Do we have any statistics on the number of PNG nationals accessing health clinics?
- 4) Who pays for this?

Answer:

- 1) Yes, there are health clinics on every inhabited island.
- 2) Patients are not transported between islands – they are evacuated to Thursday Island or the mainland when required. Queensland Health is responsible for this.
- 3) DIAC does not collect statistics on the number of PNG nationals accessing services from the health clinics on the islands. This task is undertaken by Queensland Health.
- 4) The Department of Health and Ageing funds Queensland Health approximately \$4m per year to deliver services to PNG citizens in the Torres Strait.

In relation to Immigration Response Vessels in the Torres Strait, Senator Bishop enquired,

- 1) Why did you have a vessel in the first place then?
- 2) Does this mean that when you want to move your officers around you use the capability of other agencies?

Answer:

- 1) Immigration Response Vessels were used for marine patrols around and between islands, at times for search and rescue (at the discretion of the master), and for transport between islands for training workshops and maintenance.
- 2) DIAC generally uses commercially available transport to move officers around – mostly ferries and fixed wing aircraft on regular flights. For Duaun and Ugar Islands, DIAC relies on chartered helicopters or Community Liaison Visits provided by Border Protection Command. The department can use the maritime assets of other agencies, under MOU arrangements, but this is not the standard practice, and is usually only done in relation to moving clients of the department.

In relation to statistics for Refused Immigration Clearance, Senator Kroger enquired,

- 1) So those under 'refused immigration clearance' are people who are not entitled to move as a result of being a traditional inhabitant, and others?

Answer:

- 1) The statistics for 'refused immigration clearance' relate to PNG nationals attempting to gain entry via the free movement provisions of the Treaty. The main reasons for refusal are:
 - the person is not from a Treaty village
 - the person is not visiting for a traditional purpose (eg. the stated intention is to work, or for shopping)
 - entry is not approved by an island councillor.

In relation to the statistics on asylum seekers, which were on page 14 of the Department's submission, whether any of these asylum seekers were the result of organised people smuggling activities, the Chair enquired,

1) Has subsequent inquiry determined whether any of these, particularly the larger groups, were delivered to Australia as a result of people-smuggling activities, or were they initiated by their own enterprise, as it were?

Answer:

1) Subsequent inquiry has determined that only the vessel carrying the 50 Sri Lankans was a result of people-smuggling activities.

In relation to the 50 Sri Lankans who were picked up in the Torres Strait en route to New Zealand, the Chair enquired,

1) Going back to the 50 Sri Lankans: their ship became unsafe; they chose to seek access via Torres Strait. Where are they now?

Answer:

1) Three returned voluntarily to Sri Lanka ahead of any refugee status assessment, 13 were granted a Protection Visa having been found to be refugees and, 33 have returned to Sri Lanka voluntarily after being found not to be refugees. One client is currently undergoing independent merits review.

Work Schedule for each Island

DARNLEY ISLAND – APS2 – 30 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	10.00-13.00	1500 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	10.00-13.00	1500 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	10.00-13.00	1500 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	10.00-13.00	1500 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	10.00-13.00	1500 – 1800 HRS

Casual – Week 1

Days	Morning
MONDAY	1000 - 1400
TUESDAY	1000 – 1400
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1400
THURSDAY	1000 – 1400
FRIDAY	1000 - 1400

Casual – Week 2

Days	Morning
MONDAY	1300 – 1700
TUESDAY	1300 – 1700
WEDNESDAY	1300 – 1700
THURSDAY	1300 – 1700
FRIDAY	1300 - 1700

STEPHEN ISLAND – APS1 20 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS

MER ISLAND – APS1 – 20 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY		1230 – 1630 HRS
TUESDAY		1230 – 1630 HRS
WEDNESDAY		1230 – 1630 HRS
THURSDAY		1230 – 1630 HRS
FRIDAY		1230 – 1630 HRS

SAIBAI ISLAND – APS2 – 37 HRS - CENTRAL POINT

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 - 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 - 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 - 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 - 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 - 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
SATURDAY		1500 – 1700 HRS

SAIBAI ISLAND– APS1 – 20 HRS (WEEK 1) - WESTERN POINT

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	
TUESDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	
WEDNESDAY	0830 – 1130 HRS	
THURSDAY	0830 – 1130 HRS	
FRIDAY	0930 – 1200 HRS	
SATURDAY	0900 – 1100 HRS	

SAIBAI ISLAND – APS1 – 30 HRS (WEEK 1) - CENTRAL / WESTERN POINT

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1300 – 1430 HRS
TUESDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1300 – 1430 HRS
WEDNESDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1300 – 1430 HRS
THURSDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1300 – 1430 HRS
FRIDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1300 – 1500 HRS
SATURDAY	0900 – 1100 HRS	

SAIBAI ISLAND – APS 1 – 30 HRS (WEEK 2) - WESTERN / CENTRAL POINT

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1400 – 1700 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1400 – 1700 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1400 – 1700 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1400 – 1700 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1400 – 1700 HRS
SATURDAY		

DAUAN ISLAND – APS2 – 30 HRS (Week 1)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 - 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1230 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1230 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS

DAUAN ISLAND – APS2 – 30 HRS (Week 2)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 - 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1230 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1230 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 - 1800 HRS
SATURDAY		1500 – 1700 HRS

BOIGU ISLAND – APS 2 – 37 HRS (Week 1)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
SATURDAY		1500 – 1700 HRS

BOIGU ISLAND – APS 2 – 37 HRS (Week 2)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	0800 – 1100 HRS	1400 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	0800 – 1100 HRS	1400 - 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	0800 – 1100 HRS	1400 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1400 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1400 – 1800 HRS

BOIGU ISLAND – APS 1 – 30 HRS (Week 1)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	0800 – 1130 HRS	1400 – 1800 HR
TUESDAY	0800 – 1130 HRS	1400 – 1800 HR
WEDNESDAY	0800 – 1130 HRS	1400 – 1800 HR
THURSDAY	0800 – 1130 HRS	1400 – 1800 HR
FRIDAY	0800 – 1200 HRS	1400 – 1800 HR

BOIGU ISLAND – APS 1 – 30 HRS (Week 2)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1030 – 1430 HRS	
TUESDAY	1030 – 1430 HRS	
WEDNESDAY	1030 – 1430 HRS	
THURSDAY	1030 – 1430 HRS	
FRIDAY	1030 – 1430 HRS	
SATURDAY		1500 – 1700 HRS

BADU ISLAND – APS 2 – 30 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1300 HRS	1500 – 1800 HRS

MABUIAG ISLAND – APS 2 – 20 HRS

DAYS	HRS
MONDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1400 HRS

ST.PAULS/KUBIN ISLAND - APS 1 – 20 HRS (Week 1)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
TUESDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
THURSDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS
FRIDAY		1400 – 1800 HRS

ST.PAULS/KUBIN ISLAND - APS 1 – 20 HRS (Week 2)

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 – 1200 HRS	1530 – 1730 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 – 1200 HRS	1530 – 1730 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 – 1200 HRS	1530 – 1730 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 – 1200 HRS	1530 – 1730 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 – 1200 HRS	1530 – 1730 HRS

YAM ISLAND – APS2 – 30 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY	1000 - 1330 HRS	1530 - 1800 HRS
TUESDAY	1000 - 1330 HRS	1530 - 1800 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1000 - 1330 HRS	1530 - 1800 HRS
THURSDAY	1000 - 1330 HRS	1530 - 1800 HRS
FRIDAY	1000 - 1330 HRS	1530 - 1800 HRS

WARRABER ISLAND - APS1 – 20 HRS

DAYS	HRS
MONDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
TUESDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
THURSDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
FRIDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS

PORUMA ISLAND – APS1 – 20 HRS

DAYS	HRS
MONDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
TUESDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
WEDNESDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
THURSDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS
FRIDAY	1300 – 1700 HRS

YORKE ISLAND – APS 1 – 20 HRS

DAYS	MORNING DUTY HRS	AFTERNOON DUTY HRS
MONDAY		1200 – 1600 HRS
TUESDAY		1200 – 1600 HRS
WEDNESDAY		1200 – 1600 HRS
THURSDAY		1200 – 1600 HRS
FRIDAY		1200 – 1600 HRS