

1. SUBMISSION TO SENATE ENQUIRY REGARDING COMPLIANCE BRANCH From Deborah Ruth Nicholls of Balmain NSW 2nd August 2005

I submit for consideration a very small selection of the problems experienced by asylum seekers in the community who need to renew their Bridging Visa E's at the Compliance Unit of DIMIA Parramatta. My submission is drawn from over two years experience of accompanying a number of asylum seekers when they need to go through this process. I have learned that by doing so they must regularly submit themselves to the disparaging, disdainful and hectoring attitudes which are prevalent in the so-called cultural climate within the Unit. Among the experiences:

1. Regular questioning about why they don't return to their home countries at once when they have "virtually no chance" of success from submissions to the Minister under s48B and s417 of the Migration Act, even when it is the first such submission. What possible reason, they ask, could a person have for not wishing to go back to the country of his/her birth. A response that the asylum seeker fears physical abuse or even death is ignored.
2. When it is a second request for Ministerial intervention, the time period between visas is generally limited – and that grudgingly - to two weeks, which apparently is "all that the legislation allows."
3. Recently, when it is a third request, the Compliance Officers have stated that they have "no authority" to issue anything except two-week Departure Pending Bridging Visas. This means that they are required to produce a passport at the least – a passport and a ticket in most cases – even if the decision from the Minister has not yet been handed down. Discussion of a specific case is at point 6. As most asylum seekers wish to pay for their own ticket to avoid being placed in Villawood with further travel arrangements determined by DIMIA, this leads to considerable financial stress.
4. One Burmese asylum seeker was told he must get a new Burmese passport immediately. Because he had not had any wish to renew the passport, it was several years out of date. The Myanmar Embassy demanded \$6500 "to backdate it". When the problem was explained to Compliance, one of the officers rang the Myanmar Embassy to confirm the amount – thus alerting the Myanmar authorities to the fact that the Compliance Branch was involved in the Burmese case.
5. The same asylum seeker was harangued by no less than three Compliance Officers about his lack of hope from the Minister and the necessity for obtaining the passport, despite the fact he was unable to pay for it. It took letters from several church groups promising to obtain travel documents (for about \$1000) if necessary to bring a cessation to those demands.
6. On his most recent visit the asylum seeker was told he must produce travel documents and a ticket on the 15th August for travel on the 22nd August, despite the fact that we told them it was unlikely a decision would have been reached on his 48B by then, and that (a) the travel documents are valid for only two weeks and (b) non-refundable.

As for the ticket, even the most generous airline is reluctant to give a full refund even a week prior to travel. And here was "no way" he was assured, "that the Minister would give a positive response to his recent submission, and he would "probably" have been informed of this fact by the 15th August.

7. In another case, the Moroccan Consulate was also contacted to find out why it was taking so long for her passport to be renewed, again alerting the consular authorities – and through them the Moroccan

Embassy in Tokyo – to DIMIA interest in the asylum seeker’s case, and the possibility of her deportation.

8. The same Moroccan woman was asked several times by a Compliance Officer on what basis she had requested intervention from the Minister – a matter surely not within his jurisdiction. He also made several attempts to ascertain the exact relationship between her and the friends she is staying - again, surely not within his jurisdiction.
 9. A letter of complaint to the Manager of the Compliance Unit about the incident was not acknowledged.
 10. The disdain of most of the staff is reflected in their attitude to their work, too: one officer regularly spends 20 minutes on the telephone before he begins to process the claims of the dozen or so applicant who are by then present in the office. Another takes a coffee break between each client. On a number of occasions there have been less than three officers dealing with an ever-lengthening queue; on one occasion, not a single officer was at his/her desk. This means that the average wait in the unit is one and a half to two hours.
 11. As a result of this “climate” every asylum seeker I have accompanied to the Unit has been in a state of panic – unable to sleep the night before, sitting in a virtually catatonic state while wondering what the attitude of the officer he/she sees will be; and then sitting in front of the officer while the file on the screen is being slowly examined, mysterious phone calls are made, and the officer disappears into the inner reaches of the unit to make equally mysterious enquiries of “Canberra” or “the Minister’s office” or “MIU.”
 12. An officer who veers from the established climate at the Unit can be chastised by the supervisor. I recall one case when a particularly helpful man was about to give an asylum seeker a visa of more than two weeks. Another officer saw the client and said to the officer, “What are you doing – he can’t have more than a week,” and disappeared to bring in reinforcements from the back room. The helpful man went puce with mortification. He is no longer at the Unit.
 13. As for any form of assistance from the Ministerial Intervention Unit about these matters, we have been informed by two senior case officers that issuing of actual Bridging Visas is entirely outside their jurisdiction and they have absolutely no authority to make requests about them to Compliance. **This seems to be a very serious anomaly in the legislation which requires urgent investigation.**
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2. KRISTINA'S STORY

SEPARATION FROM BABY, THREATS, DIMIA DISCREDITATION CAMPAIGN

K██████████ is from Vladivostok in Russia. In 1995 K██████████ witnessed a murder which changed her life. She was working as a croupier in a casino in Vladivostok when she saw the murder. She was told to count her takings but not to leave the building. She thought that she was waiting for the police to come. Four men told her that she would be escorted home and she assumed that this was for her protection. Instead, she was brutally raped and held over a fifth floor balcony by her arms.

After this brutal incident some other thugs visited her mother and beat her. They said that K██████████ was to disappear. K██████████ took the passport of a friend in Moscow and went to Thailand. After her arrival in Thailand she learnt that her friend in Moscow had been murdered and her mother advised her not to come back to Russia.

K██████████ arrived in Australia in 1998. After a time she formed a liaison with S██████████ who is the father of baby A██████████. K██████████ decided to leave S██████████ before she had the baby because of his violence. She stayed with friends for the last four months of her pregnancy.

In May, 2002 when baby A██████████ was five months old K██████████ was detained in Villawood and the baby was given to the father. She was told that she would be deported almost immediately and that the baby could not go with her because he was Australian. At first K██████████ saw A██████████ for only a few hours each week. She received several letters from Immigration warning her that she would be deported but this did not eventuate because she went to the Family Court so that she could have access to A██████████.

This was a drawn out and difficult process and while this was happening she received several letters from DIMIA telling her that her deportation was imminent. At the same time the father stopped bringing baby A██████████ to Villawood. He claimed that he did not have time to worry about A██████████'s need for his mother because he had to take his two children (he is divorced from the mother) to The Kings School each morning.

K██████████ had to set up a roster so that her baby could be picked up from the father and delivered to the father three days a week. I was one of the people who helped to pick up and deliver baby A██████████, so I was able to witness the distress of the mother. Each day was a tremendous ordeal for her because she was still receiving letters warning her that she was to be deported and she was fighting to have some sort of access to her child.

At all times DIMIA played a cat and mouse game with K██████████. I visited Ruddock's Chief of Staff in Canberra, only to be told that K██████████ was an unfit mother and that the baby would be better off with the father. This seemed quite incongruous to me because I knew that she was fighting for a child that she loved and wanted and I was one of many people (staff and visitors) who could see that K██████████ was an excellent mother.

One day I received a call from a detainee who was very distressed because K██████████ had not wanted to hand the baby back to the father (she did not know if she would see A██████████ again) -- A guard tore the baby from K██████████'s arms and she became inconsolable. She had to be heavily sedated for few days.

Finally, K██████████ was released from Villawood after my husband and I agreed to sponsor her. Previously we had written to the minister to request her release on compassionate grounds but this request was

denied. K [REDACTED] is now out of Villawood but she is still fighting in the courts to have more access to her child. The whole situation is tragic because a five month old child should not have been separated from his mother in the first place.

I truly believe that DIMIA has acted in cruel and vengeful fashion towards [REDACTED]. I did not appreciate the fact that DIMIA tried to discredit her each time that I tried to speak on her behalf.

At the moment she is still fighting for custody of her child and if the outcome is not positive, I fear for her sanity.

Lyn Chaikin
Rose Bay
NS.W.

3. KOOMI'S STORY - FORCED REMOVAL, INJECTIONS, IMPRISONMENT

On the 11th January, 2005 Koomi was deported from Villawood Detention Centre. He had been in detention for seven years. He was severely depressed and he had never been assessed by a psychiatrist.

I visited Koomi for three years. All his African compatriots now living in Sydney knew his background and they knew that he could not return to his country because he had been so outspoken about Sharia Law. Koomi studied law and he was a great follower of his relative an ex army general who now lives in Perth. His Uncle had tried to stage a coup because he was against Sharia Law and he had to escape from Africa many years ago.

Many people tried to help Koomi. Politicians and journalists spoke to Mr. Ruddock and to Ms. Vanstone about his plight. A leading member of his community saw Ms Vanstone and begged for his release on humanitarian grounds.

We encouraged him to continue with his law studies. We had everything in place because we thought that the government would finally realise that they had made a mistake. It was obvious that he was a genuine refugee like his Uncle. Koomi is from an influential family and he did not need to leave Africa for economic reasons.

Just after his seventh year in detention, late in the evening, Koomi was surrounded by five men wearing helmets and carrying batons. He was taken to his room where they all remained for one hour. After they all emerged from his room he was taken to a holding room. He appeared to be drugged. (we now know that he was injected) He was then taken by a chartered flight to Dubai. A personnel of about nine people went on the plane. His mouth was taped, he was handcuffed and shackled. At Dubai, he was drugged again and transported to his final destination by a local airline. (accompanied by five guards)

Once he was in Africa he was handed over to Interpol. His family paid a lot of money to keep him out of prison. He was placed under House Arrest and taken away intermittently to be interrogated, often most violently. Sometimes he had to stay overnight or three days in prison. He was due to appear before a Military Court and advised that if he was lucky, he would serve ten to fifteen years in prison for desertion.

Koomi's family became aware that he would have to escape again from his country because people "disappear" from military prisons on a regular basis.

His family removed him to another African country and he has now moved once again. His mother has also been forced to escape because she could also go to prison.

THESE QUESTIONS WERE TABLED IN PARLIAMENT A FEW MONTHS AFTER KOOMI'S REMOVAL BUT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ANSWERED.

Koomi escaped from Africa fearing for his life. He was a 24 year old policeman with qualification. He was a pacifist. He arrived in Australia in 1997 asking for political asylum, but instead of asylum he was taken away in handcuffs and incarcerated in Villawood Detention Centre for over seven years.

Koomi was identified by all the members of his African community. They knew him and they knew his Uncle. After his seventh year in detention Koomi was severely depressed. DIMIA has a duty of care to all those held in Immigration Detention, so:-

1. Why was Koomi never assessed by a registered psychiatrist despite being warned by refugee advocates that he was spiralling into deep depression and irrational behaviour?
2. Why was Koomi removed late at night without being previously advised about his removal?
3. Why was Koomi's family member who held his Power of Attorney and who had previously met with Amanda Vanstone to express his fear regarding the deteriorating mental condition of Koomi and also his fear that Koomi would be deported to Africa where he would not be safe not advised of his removal or given any information when he called Immigration on numerous occasions in January 2005, asking for the whereabouts of his nephew.
4. Why was it necessary to remove Koomi from Australia accompanied by nine police and DIMIA personnel wearing full riot gear?
5. Was Koomi transported by a private plane or an airforce plane?
6. Why was it necessary to shackle Koomi's arms and legs and to chemically restrain him by way of sedation?
7. Was Koomi deported straight to Africa or did the plane stop in Dubai?
8. If Koomi was taken to Dubai en route to Africa, was he forceably chemically restrained on arrival in Africa?
9. Was Koomi handed an account for his seven years in detention? If so, how much was the account?
10. Was Koomi, together with his documents, handed over to Interpol on his arrival in Africa?
11. What will happen to Koomi now that he has to face a military court?

PART OF A REPORT BY KOOMI DESCRIBING TWO ATTEMPTED DEPORTATIONS.

I'd been informed by the DIMIA for the first time in October 1999 that I had been denied a visa. I expressed my denial by hitting the desk before the DIMIA officer. They handcuffed me and I asked them to free my hands and to discuss the matter with me. They refused. I was told that I would be punished for this.

Another handcuff was put on my hand and I was taken to the prison. I was there for one week. I was then taken to the airport, without being informed. Two policemen took me, treated me exactly like an animal. The first policeman drew me by my throat which caused me congestion and difficulties in swallowing and eating for a week. The other drew me by my hand fiercely - that is by the handcuff chain, that has left an obvious scar till now.

They put me on the aeroplane and the captain refused to carry me after I told him what was happening. So they got me back to prison. My solicitor attended at the prison and wrote another application to the Minister. One week later and in the same unexplained procedure another correction officer attended my cell, handcuffed me and asked me to come with them to the reception where I'd been received by ACM officials, including a doctor and a nurse there. They put me in a solitary cell, asked me to sit down on the floor to hear the Immigration Agent's instructions. She informed me about the Minister's deportation decision. On asking her to talk to me and discuss the matter she refused and departed.

Soon the doctor entered the cell carrying an injection with four tablets asking me to choose either the injection or the tablets. I refused them both. He, the doctor, ordered the security officers to do their job and he and the officers laid me down on the floor and sit, both of them, on my back, took my pants down to give a chance for the doctor to inject me. So then I accepted to receive the tablets since I got an old medical problem with injections.

The doctor told me how those tablets are only tranquillisers. But they didn't work. So they force me to take a fifth tablet at the airport when they got me on the airplane with a wheelchair accompanied by a nurse, two companions and three other ACM officers. All that continued for about five to six hours with three types of handcuffs and ties of leather, plastic and steel around my hands and belly that gathered my arms to my trunk.!!! I stood screaming and asking for help from the passengers there. I immediately regretted that because those companion escort officers started to hit me and beat me fiercely and cruelly with kicks all over my body especially my genitalia with their knees and feet which subsequently caused left testis congested lesions and pain.

The testis swelling is still evident on inspection and palpation till now.

The nurse on trying to inject in my leg missed my body to hit the plane seat where the needle got bent. But he didn't change the needle and injected me again with the contaminated needle in a completely odd side on my leg, immediately above my left knee where the scar and pigmentation still clearly seen.

I continued to scream and ask for help until few passengers cried and combined and come to relieve my oppression. But they are rejected and they stop. So the officers got me to the prison. Silverwater for the third time where they put me in a special quarantine room for the addicts for five days because I became physically and medically sick.

In December 1999 I've been moved from the prison to the detention centre again where I am now. Since then I haven't consulted any medical personnel in detention since losing the trust in any of them who works for this ACM to deal with psychological trauma.

My complaints and suffering in brief.

1. Pain, tenderness and swelling of the left scrotum
2. Swallowing difficulties secondary to throat harsh gripping and drawing.
3. Back pain, secondary to heavy weight and pressure, two officers sit on it.
4. Pain, tenderness and scar on my left leg secondary to the contaminated needle injection.
5. Over 50 days in prison with all its psychological tension and trauma against no offence I've done.

Koomi's saga continues. He is now in hiding and he does not know where he can go next. He and his mother are very sick and depressed. **KOOMI WAS THE LONGEST SERVING DETAINEE IN AUSTRALIA.**

Lyn Chaikin
Rose Bay. N.S.W.

4. PROBLEM: TIME REQUIRED FOR MINISTERIAL DECISIONS

DRAMUN AND RIFANI'S STORY [Pseudonyms]

This couple with their three children, two from Rifani's first marriage and one from this marriage were detained in VIDC in July 2003.

In late 2003, we applied for a protection of the youngest child, who had not been included in the claims of either parent, who had come to Australia separately and married subsequently.

The claim was rejected at the DIMIA level and the first RRT hearing was held in early January 2004. A second hearing was held in April 2004. At the end of June 2004, the member who had heard the case left the Tribunal (her contract was not renewed). In August 2004 the youngest child was given a Permanent Protection Visa and in late September, following health and security checks, the rest of the family were given Bridging Visa Es, (with work rights for the father, study rights for the children but no rights for the mother) and the family was released.

It should be noted that in her decision the RRT member was not able to resolve an issue about the mother's identity. As two experts on the Acehnese language agreed that she spoke Acehnese, she did accept that the mother was Acehnese. She was unable to resolve an issue raised in an anonymous letter to DIMIA which stated that she had given a false identity. Our efforts to prove who she was by producing letters giving the dates and place of birth for Ms Fauzi and her two daughters proved unconvincing, as the

midwife who signed the letters when contacted by the Australian embassy in Jakarta (we believe out of fear of involvement with a family of interest to the military) stated that this was not her signature.

In October 2004 the family's lawyer sent a submission to the Minister requesting that the family be given humanitarian visas under section 417. On 23rd February, a ministerial delegate called the parents for an interview in which all these issues of identity were discussed in great detail. At the end of the interview Dramun and Rifani agreed that DIMIA requested it he would do a DNA test to prove that he was not the father of Rifani's two daughters. No such request has been received.

At the end of the interview we were told that the delegate would make a summary of her findings and once this was signed by Dramun and the case would be forwarded to the minister.

In early July I spoke with Mr M [REDACTED] of the Sydney office of the Ministerial Intervention Unit. He told me that the case was nearly ready to go to the minister – it had to be read by two of his superiors and then would be sent on.

This family is very stressed because of the uncertainty. It is having a very detrimental effect especially on the older daughter who is 10 years old. The family was very traumatized by the Tsunami and lost many family members. They also have financial concerns. They don't yet have Medicare coverage (except for the youngest child) and no parenting allowance. It is very difficult to support a family of five on Drumon's salary of about \$500 net a week.

It should be a straightforward alternative between accepting that Rifani is who she says she is or giving the family an opportunity to prove this by taking a DNA test.

They waited 8 months for a RRT decision and have now waited almost 9 months for the MIU to write a submission for the minister. Even when this reaches the minister's desk, because of the large backlog, it is likely to take many more months before the minister makes a decision.

Written by Jenny Toisuta,
Balmain for Refugees
Balmain Uniting Church

**5. NEED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT POSSIBLE PERSECUTION FACED BY
FAMILY LEFT BEHIND WHEN DETERMINING WHETHER TO GIVE A
REFUGEE A PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY PROTECTION VISA.**

Harbon's Story [Pseudonym].

Harban fled from Aceh in late 2000. In 1999 with a group of other Acehnese he had set up an organization to assist displaced persons who had lost their homes as a result of the conflict between the Military and the Aceh Independence movement. In early August 2 members of the organization were kidnapped by the mobile police and disappeared. In late August his older brother and 3 friends disappeared. They were carrying letters from Bonar asking other Acehnese to donate to the organization. He decided to flee after the military came twice to his house looking for him.

He buried all his papers showing his true identity and escaped by driving a truck overnight to the next province and then by bus to Jakarta. It was impossible to take his wife with him because he would never have got through.

As he believed the military was still searching for him throughout Indonesia, he got a passport in a false name and a visa and came to Australia arriving in early 2001.

Harbon's wife, stayed with her parents and their son was born in May 2001. She reports that she lives in fear of physical especially sexual abuse and also for her life.
For instance:

1. After Harbon disappeared, the military continued to come to her home asking where he was.
2. In 2003 following the imposition of the military emergency, with other women whose husbands had left the village, she was required to report once a week to the military barracks (a walk of over 3 kilometers). As she took her 2 year old son there, she was allowed to leave after she reported but those without children were required to stay overnight – villagers believe they were forced to provide sexual favours for the military.
3. More recently, she has been allowed to report once a month to a new military post set up in the village about 700 meters from her home. However, she must also give information to the military about the activities of villagers particularly anything related to the Aceh Independence movement. If she does not give information then she is verbally abused. Her fear is that the military will get very angry with her if she continues to have no information and may abuse her. Alternatively there may be new instructions from headquarters to harm her.

We have appealed to the minister to allow Harbon's TPV to be reassessed without waiting for the normal 30 months. We have also asked UNHCR to take up this case with the minister.

Written by Jenny Toisuta
Balmain for Refugees
Balmain Uniting Church

6. Ali's Story *

From Pakistan

In Australia since December 1987

Ali has resided 17 years in Australia. He was employed 8 years in the NSW Police Service administrative and commercial services. His achievements in this branch are shown in several certificates he has obtained during his working years. His brother who has 5 children is an Australian citizen.

Ali has been in detention for 15 months. He paid \$950.00 to his solicitor of several years in February 2004 to lodge the bridging visa application. In March 2004 the solicitor had not yet lodged the application and for 5 weeks Ali had become illegal. The solicitor asked Ali to resign from his job. Ali did not resign and was detained. He has applied for a visa on humanitarian grounds in vain.

Mr Brian Davies has written to the Director of Detainee Case Coordinators on 25/5/05 and did not receive a reply. He wrote again on 9/7/05, as follows:

"You will recall that his appeal of an earlier RRT finding had been upheld in the Federal Court on 19/4/05, nonetheless he has since continued to be kept in detention, that his subsequent approaches to DIMIA staff at Villawood had been brushed off with entirely unsuitable responses-don't annoy us, don't argue with us- while he sees others in exactly similar circumstances to his being released"

Ali has also written to A. Vanstone twice on 23/5/05 and 26/5/05 and did not receive any reply. He is hoping his case will be heard at RRT next month. The lawyer engaged by him now, is handicapped because DIMIA has not supplied the documents that he needs.

Ali's health deterioration is becoming very serious. I have noticed he has lost a lot of weight. He is too skinny for a 40 years old man.

He has been examined twice at Liverpool hospital. A stomach endoscopy was performed on 19/7/05. The anxiety and mental distress are adding to the poor health condition.

Why Ali has not been granted a bridging visa in order that he can prepare for his appearance at the RRT? Why the Minister does not reply? Why the health of those in detention is neglected to the point of driving them to mental problems and to suicide?

Ali has many testimonials of his working performance and personality.

* First name changed and surname suppressed to protect the applicant

From past experience it has been found that asylum seekers who have appealed to organisations like the UN or Human Rights, had their cases rejected by DIMIA. The perception of the applicants is that DIMIA is punishing them.

Sydney 22 July 2005

A. Daligand.

Moslem Community

Coalition for the Protection of Asylum Seekers

7. Raman's Story *

37 years old

Algerian citizen, Ethnic group: Berber

Raman was blackmailed by Islamists extremists as he was the manager of a discothèque/bar. He employed his cousin Rachid as a waiter who was murdered by an extremist group (GIA) on 5/02/1997. Raman had obtained an exemption for military service on account of his studies. He was a member of the FFS (Front des Forces Socialistes) a party fighting for the rights of the Berbers (His ethnic group) opposed to the government.

Following the menaces from the armed group and the murder of his cousin Rachid, he feared for his safety. He left Algeria in May 1997. He went to Morocco, Malaysia and finally reached Australia in May 1999, where he applied for asylum. After 5 months, the application was refused. Three months later the case was heard at the RRT.

The ignorance of the basic facts by the Member of the tribunal was demonstrated in the following (verifications can be made in the court transcript):

- 1) The Member said that Raman had 3 brothers and 4 sisters, while in reality he has 4 brothers and 2 sisters (as shown in the document given to the court)
- 2) The member did not understand the Algerian school system (based on the French system) and queried the fact that Raman went to school till he was 21 years old. He had repeated a year at the lycee (high school) and had attended 18 months of a course on data processing till September 1991.
- 3) He opened the discotheque/ bar in 1996 as shown on the "Certificat de Travail" but the Member insisted he had opened it in 1994.
- 4) The Member called him mistakenly, Mr. Bangladesh twice as shown in the transcript.
- 5) A certificate from the Algerian Minister of Youth and Sport in the French language had a spelling error. The Member blamed Raman for it. Would he be responsible for the writing of an official document?
- 6) He employed his cousin Rachid as a waiter, he was murdered on 5/2/97 as shown on the death certificate. The Member insisted he was murdered on 25/06/1999. This is clearly the date of issue on the copy of the certificate.
- 6) The member kept asking why a document issued in Algeria had the stamp URGENT and no date. Raman is not responsible for the system of administration in his country. When it says URGENT it means very soon or now so there is not date of requirement.
- 7) The Member asked why he was shown as manager not owner of the discotheque/ bar. In 1996 when he opened the discotheque, he already was registered as the owner of a household appliances shop. The law, which has been changed since, did not allow him to register as owner of two businesses.

During the above period in Australia, he was the holder of a working permit and had a tax file number. The first year that he worked he paid \$6000 income tax and the second year \$4000. He also worked as a volunteer for the Olympic Games held in Australia. He contacted a lawyer who asked for \$2000 to take the case. He was paying him \$500 every month. The lawyer told him he had written to the Minister for Immigration. After he had paid between \$1000 to \$1500, he was arrested for being an illegal migrant. He protested it was not the case. But he was told he was illegal for the last 6 months. It seems the lawyer had not written to the minister. During his detention, Raman saw his lawyer, who kept saying he had written to the Minister. Raman was detained in the Immigration detention centre from 2001 till 2003.

He is the holder of a Bridging Visa E which does not allow him to study, work, to receive Centrelink or to have a Medicare card. He does not know when the case will be heard again or if it will be heard at all. In spite of not having any income, he must go and sign every week at the Dimia's office in town. Three weeks ago it was changed to every fortnight.

* First name changed, surname suppressed to protect the asylum seeker whom I have known and visited during his detention and I am still seeing now and is often a guest in my home.

Amina Daligand

Sydney 21 July 2005