

# Project SafeCom News and Updates

Sunday, 13 August 2017

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# 1. Yassmin Abdel-Magied: where were my free-speech defenders?

The Age  
August 7 2017 - 10:02PM  
Timna Jacks

Andrew Bolt, are you up to the challenge?

Mechanical engineer, author and social justice activist Yassmin Abdel-Magied has provoked the right-wing columnist: "If Andrew Bolt cares so much about freedom of speech as much as he reckons, he should have defended me. Where were all the defenders of freedom of speech in my case?"

Ms Abdel-Magied – who describes herself the most "publicly hated Muslim in Australia" - made the comments after months of intense criticism following a Facebook post on Anzac Day, in which she suggested Australians should also remember the suffering on Manus Island, Nauru, and in Syria and Palestine. Her post was criticised by Bolt, a conservative commentator.

Ms Abdel-Magied said the experience taught her that freedom of speech was not shared equally by all Australians. "The conversation is not on my terms, it's not on the terms of any marginalised group," Ms Abdel-Magied said.

Since her Anzac Day Facebook post, which she deleted, the woman who was named the 2015 Queensland Young Australian of the Year, became the victim of daily death threats, intense criticism from conservative Australian politicians, and her ABC show Australia Wide was axed.

Last month, the severed head of a pig encased in a bag with a swastika was dumped at the gate of her old school in Brisbane.

Speaking on Monday evening at an Age subscriber event at Deakin Edge, hosted in partnership with the Melbourne Writers Festival, Ms Abdel-Magied said the campaign waged against her has left her with a bitter view of Australia: "I don't think I can hand on heart say that we are a country that isn't racist. People themselves may not be racist, but structurally, I don't think I can say that anymore."

Ms Abdel-Magied made the comments on a panel convened by Age news director Michelle Griffin, which included Pakistani/Australian writer and comedian Sami Shah, libertarian author and commentator Chris Berg, and author and documentary maker John Safran. The panel discussed free speech, equality and extremism in Australia.

Chris Berg said he was concerned that Australians were shutting down views that did not reflect their own, and warned this behaviour could lead to extremism. "I'm concerned about a segment of the population that is embracing and seeking the bubble ... I've seen some data on this, that people who are using the technological capacity they have now, to grow into a narrower ideological frame. They identify a smaller community on the internet, and they choose to exclude information that violates the beliefs of that [community]."

"You might be a far-right radical in country Victoria, now you are a far-right radical who can communicate with far-right radicals in Melbourne or Germany or wherever they may be."

White nationalists, Aussie ISIS supporters and some "inflammatory Jewish people" have become friends of Mr Safran, who said he spent 18 months "hanging out with people on the fringe of the fringes" to research his new book, *Depends What You Mean By Extremist*.

Mr Safran said Islamophobia was being co-opted by radical far-right and white nationalists who were looking for an "acceptable" platform to peddle fringe views, which included a desire to "upend the entire system of Western liberalism".

"They saw this opening, they saw there was this anti-Islamic sentiment that was acceptable ... they saw that you can get away with talking about that stuff without being taken off to the loony bin."

In response, Ms Griffin suggested: "Isn't that even more morally appalling than actually believing it?"

Mr Safran: "Oh yeah it was pretty annoying, but it was good for the book."

Sami Shah, said he too found a surprising opportunity to boost sales of his new book, *The Islamic Republic of Australia*. It was Pauline Hanson.

The One Nation leader posting a photo of the book cover on her Facebook page and asked: "How do you feel about Dymocks book range?"

Mr Shah said: "She's very charitable ... when she insults your book, the book sales go up."

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/yassmin-abdelmagied-where-were-my-freespeech-defenders-20170807-gxrae2.html>

## 2. The Saturday Paper: Exporting Australia's offshore detention policy

The Manus Island detention centre may be closing, but its legacy lives on in Europe, where leaders have looked to Australia for lessons on how to stop the boats – no matter the human cost. By Max Opray.

The Saturday Paper  
Edition No. 168 August 5 – 11, 2017  
By Max Opray

They took Sayid away in a yellow Corolla. It was late 2015, and the 26-year-old IT support worker was returning home from his job at the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan when he was abducted off the street by Taliban militants. With a knife they extracted promises from Sayid to help them hack the electoral system, before dumping him bloodied, bound and hooded on the outskirts of Kabul.

“They said to me, ‘If you want to be alive, help us to clean the country of foreigners,’” he tells The Saturday Paper.

“So I said I will help. They copied all the contact details from my phone, told me, ‘We are going to call you and give an address, so you can come and tell us what systems you are using, what firewall you are doing.’ I was really badly afraid – it was the most dangerous thing in my life.”

Sayid did not honour his promise. He fled for Pakistan, a country he'd first claimed asylum in at the age of two, when his family escaped along “a road filled with bodies and blood” from intertribal conflict in Kabul.

This time round the Pakistanis were not so welcoming – the police imprisoned Sayid for a month in order to extort a bribe out of his relatives back home.

Once free, Sayid looked further afield. Friends and family had tried for Australia, only to be left stranded in Indonesia for years on account of the repulsive power of a three-word slogan.

Others who had gone to Europe told him they were welcomed there, so Sayid opted to take his chances on the Mediterranean rather than the Timor sea.

FULL STORY AT <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2017/08/05/exporting-australias-offshore-detention-policy/15018552005019>

## 3. 'There'll be a big tragedy': Manus deadlock could reach breaking point

Refugees continue protest against the withdrawal of power, water and medical services, part of a broader campaign to force them to relocate

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Sunday 6 August 2017 16.07 AEST

Refugees held on Manus Island have continued their protest against the power, water and medical services being withdrawn from the detention centre, part of a broader campaign to forcibly relocate them to a new camp in Lorengau they say is unsafe.

The protests have run daily at 2pm for most of this week, and are being met with an increased security presence around the centre, and the lockdown of some compounds.

Water and power has been cut off to parts of the detention centre.

There have been rising tensions between the refugees and Manusians in recent months, and a spate of attacks, including with machetes, on refugees in the Lorengau township.

Iranian journalist and refugee Behrouz Boochani said increasing pressure was being brought to bear on refugees.

Boochani said about 20 refugees had fallen ill and were quarantined in the detention centre's medical centre, which was operating at reduced capacity. He said it was probably because the camp had gone for days without running water for drinking and bathing.

Boochani expected the protests to be forcibly ended.

“Reliable source says local police and special forces will attack detention centre in coming days. If so, there'll be a big tragedy.

“The protest at this moment is focused on ‘power and water’ because immigration cut power and water in the largest compound in Manus. I think in any culture in the world it's so immoral to cut the power and water on innocent people who

have committed no crime. We want to let every person in Australia know that your government is doing this immoral act to us.”

He said the refugees did not necessarily want to go to Australia, only to a country where they would be safe.

Previous demonstrations inside the detention centre have been allowed to run for several days before security guards, Australian Border Force officials and PNG police have stormed the compounds.

A mass hunger strike in January 2015 ended when dozens of police raided the compound, arresting and jailing those who were taking part.

Tensions on the island have risen after details of the phone call between the Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, and the US president, Donald Trump, after the “US deal”, for months posited as the solution to Australia’s offshore islands of Manus and Nauru, revealed the refugee swap appeared unlikely to happen.

Under the deal, 1250 refugees from the Australian-controlled regional processing centres on Manus and Nauru were supposed to be exchanged for central American refugees from American-run camps in Costa Rica.

But Turnbull told Trump he didn’t have to accept any refugees from Australia’s control.

In a transcript of the phone call leaked on Friday, Turnbull pleaded with Trump to publicly commit to honouring the refugee swap deal, even if he didn’t intend to resettle anybody.

“It does not require you to take any ... the obligation is to only go through the process.”

Turnbull is also heard calling the refugees “economic refugees” – a categorisation that does not exist. Economic hardship is not a criterion for refugee status and all those being proposed for resettlement have been found to be refugees – that is, they have a “well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries”. They are legally owed protection by Australia.

The details of the phone call have exposed the US deal as fraudulent, Boochani said.

“If people, media and politicians read the conversation between the Australian prime minister and American president, they can see that the US deal is a fake deal and its only purpose is to put the refugees through a long process to waste time.”

Another refugee, Imran Mohammad, told the Human Rights Law Centre, he despaired for his future after four years on Manus Island.

“I just cried as I was reading the transcripts of the most two powerful leaders in this world. Their words made me feel like I am just a product to them and I can be traded for anything.

“I am just a human being and there is no need to play with my life.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/06/there-ll-be-a-big-tragedy-manus-deadlock-could-reach-breaking-point>

## **4. Iranian asylum seeker dies on Manus Island, human rights groups call for urgent review**

ABC News Online  
Monday August 7, 2017

Manus Island authorities have confirmed an Iranian asylum seeker has died at the immigration detention centre.

An Immigration Department spokesman said the Government was aware of the death in the Lorengau township. Police are investigating the incident and have cordoned off the area where the man was found. The cause of death is not known.

Amnesty International refugee coordinator Graham Thom said the death was “heartbreaking news”. “It is not yet clear if his death was a result of self-harm or violence,” he said. “This death is yet another bleak tragedy to arise out of the ongoing suffering and tensions on Manus Island. “There must be an independent, impartial, prompt and effective investigation into his death.”

### ***Man’s death preceded by protests***

The death is the sixth to take place in an Australian offshore detention centre since 2014, according to Monash University’s Australian Border Deaths Database.

It comes following days of protests inside the centre, against attempts to force the asylum seekers to move out.

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre's a Blucher said tensions were increasing at the immigration centre.

"No matter what the circumstances are around today's reported death, Manus is not safe for refugees," she said in a statement.

"We are deeply concerned for the refugees and people seeking asylum who remain on Manus."

The asylum seekers confronted guards and police on Friday, refusing to leave the compound.

Most of the 700 refugees on the island are refusing to move because they believe they are not safe in the PNG community.

The refugees on Manus Island are being encouraged to move permanently to the town, as the detention centre closes down.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-07/iranian-asylum-seeker-dies-on-manus-island/8781518>

## **5. Asylum seeker found dead on Manus Island**

Circumstances of the man's death are contested by other refugees on the island after his body was found in forest near the East Lorengau transit centre

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Monday 7 August 2017 13.00 AEST

An asylum seeker has been found dead on Manus Island.

The man's body was found in a forest area near the East Lorengau refugee transit centre, where he was being held.

The Manus province police chief, Inspector David Yapu, confirmed the death and said a crime scene had been established.

Guardian Australia has been shown photographs purporting to show the man's body as it was found in the forest.

The body has visible wounds, but the circumstances of the man's death are unclear. The initial reported cause of his death has been contested by other refugees on the island.

Guardian Australia understands the man had been suffering acute mental health crises for more than a year, and whose friends had pleaded with Australian authorities for him to be given greater care and treatment.

Guardian Australia is not publishing the man's name or identifying details until they have been confirmed and his family has been notified.

Australia's department of immigration and border protection – which runs the detention centre and the refugee transit centre – has been contacted for comment.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/07/refugee-found-dead-on-manus-island>

## **6. MEDIA RELEASE: One more death on Manus; More blood on Turnbull's hands**

Monday August 7, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

A 31 year-old Iranian asylum seeker, Hamid, was found hanging from a tree this morning (Monday) near the school close to the East Lorengau Transit Accommodation.

"Hamid's death brings the Manus detention death toll to five. Five lives cut short by the brutality of offshore detention," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

Hamid's mental health problems were well-known for months. He had been held in prison at the Lorengau settlement, then was placed at the East Lorengau centre when he was released.

"Like all the others who have died on Manus, Hamid should never have been in detention or been on Manus. Detention had robbed him of his mental health and now it has taken his life. Whatever the immediate cause, it is Dutton and Turnbull who are responsible for his death," said Rintoul

While suicide is suspected, mystery surrounds his death. His body was found near the school well outside East Lorengau centre. Refugees on Manus are convinced that his death is suspicious as Hamid had often been beaten by locals.

The centre has been particularly controversial in the last few weeks as Border Force and PNG immigration have cut power and water from Foxtrot compounds in an effort to force refugees to leave the detention centre and move to East Lorengau.

"Hamid's death will confirm the worst fears of refugees on Manus. Manus is not safe. East Lorengau is not safe. They have already told Border Force that they will not move," said Rintoul.

"Turnbull must act immediately to call off the siege of Foxtrot compound and end the moves to force refugees to move to East Lorengau. The asylum seekers should never have been sent to Manus or Nauru. It is long past time to bring them to Australia. There is no other option.

"There must be a full and open enquiry into Hamid's death. No one has any confidence that an inquiry by local PNG police could possibly be independent."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

## **7. Manus Island asylum seeker's friends begged Australia for help before his death**

Body of Hamed Shamshiripour, whose friends had complained about his treatment by authorities, was found near Australian-run centre

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Monday 7 August 2017 16.46 AEST

An asylum seeker who had been suffering acute mental health crises for more than a year – and whose friends had pleaded with Australian authorities for him to be treated – has been found dead on Manus Island.

The body of Hamed Shamshiripour, an Iranian national, was found in the forest near the Australian-run East Lorengau refugee transit centre. Manus province police chief, Inspector David Yapu, confirmed the death and said a crime scene had been established.

The Guardian has seen photographs, purporting to show Shamshiripour as he was found in the forest. The body has visible wounds, but the circumstances of his death are unclear.

The initial reported cause of his death, suicide, has been contested by refugees and asylum seekers on the island. There are reports from Manus island that Shamshiripour had been missing since Saturday.

Shamshiripour, 31, had initially been rejected for refugee status, but that status was being reviewed. Several refugees said Shamshiripour had recently made attempts to commit suicide.

Shamshiripour had spent some time in Australia for medical treatment.

The Guardian reported in June last year that Shamshiripour was found, naked in the Mike compound, yelling in an incoherent and distressed state, and was arrested and taken to Lorengau prison, before being taken to the "managed accommodation area" within the detention centre for people suffering mental health problems.

According to a formal complaint made by 14 fellow refugees and asylum seekers, Shamshiripour was beaten by guards instead of being cared for.

"We, the signatories to this complaint form want to know why you are not providing mental health support to Hamed ... and instead you have subjected him to ill-treatment and corporal punishment because he is not behaving normally due to his mental ailment."

In January this year, Shamshiripour was jailed again following an acute mental breakdown. He was released from prison, only to be found wandering the streets of Lorengau half-naked, "hungry and homeless" according to refugees, police and politicians on the island.

Leaked psychological support files from within the Manus Island detention centre refer consistently to Shamshiripour's "chaotic presentation" and report he was "agitated, aggressive, verbally abusive, pushing boundaries constantly, and has required police presence on numerous occasions".

Another report says: "Hamed is currently acting erratic, raising serious mental health concerns, and not engaging in linear discussions with case managers or others. Hamed's behaviour prevents a cooperative, meaningful engagement and report based on observations.

"Hamed informed case manager he has not made a decision about returning to Iran (while he was singing he said I want to go to Iran, wants to go to Persia). He has become a danger to stakeholders and residents alike with his erratic and unpredictable behaviour."

In other reports, Shamshiripour was seen by staff drinking local home-brew alcohol and was warned of its dangers.

Shamshiripour was jailed several times after suffering severe mental episodes and behaving unpredictably or aggressively. Detention centre staff told Guardian Australia he was "a very sick man. He needs serious help."

In January Manus MP Ron Knight, who arranged for Shamshiripour to be released from prison so he could access mental healthcare, said he was receiving none. "To be blunt, the guy is dangerous to all around him and he needs psychiatric help. There is none for him here." Knight said he approached the Australian high commission in Port Moresby about Shamshiripour being committed to a psychiatric facility. "The response to me was basically that our authorities should handle it."

Australia's Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which runs the detention centre and the refugee transit centre on Monday confirmed it was "aware of a death in Lorengau township". "PNG authorities are investigating the matter. Further questions should be directed to the government of PNG."

Shamshiripour's family has been informed of his death.

Five refugees and asylum seekers have died on Manus Island under Australian government control since offshore processing was restarted in 2012. Ian Rintoul from the Refugee Action Coalition said while suicide was suspected in Shamshiripour's death, refugees on Manus were convinced his death was suspicious as he had been targeted for violence in the community.

Rintoul said Shamshiripour's death confirmed the worst fears of refugees who are currently being coerced to leave the detention centre for the transit centre where Shamshiripour was held. "Manus is not safe. East Lorengau is not safe. They have already told border force that they will not move."

Amnesty International's Graham Thom said Shamshiripour's death was "yet another bleak tragedy to arise out of the ongoing suffering and tensions on Manus Island". "It is not yet clear if his death was a result of self-harm or violence. Irrespective of the cause, Australia must accept liability for the damage its cruel policies are causing refugees.

"This was a man who came seeking Australia's protection, Amnesty International is gravely concerned that he was provided inadequate healthcare and that his safety was not the paramount consideration."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/07/manus-island-asylum-seekers-friends-begged-australia-for-help-before-his-death>

## **8. MEDIA RELEASE: Biggest rally yet says 'Hands Off Foxtrot'**

Sunday August 6, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

Sunday 6 August has seen the biggest protest so far inside the Manus Island detention centre to stop the closure of Foxtrot compound. (Photos attached)

Hundreds gathered at the Foxtrot compound calling for the power to be officially restored; "informal" wiring by refugee electricians has re-established power to the compound since power was officially cut off on 1 August.

Today also saw cleaners returned to the compound after unhygienic conditions saw 20 people admitted to the medical clinic for treatment.

Some of the banners openly mocked the Turnbull/Trump conversation transcript where Turnbull blatantly explains that Trump does not need to take any refugees from Manus and Nauru.

"Turnbull needs to call off the attempt to close Foxtrot," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition, "Or to force refugees to move from the centre to East Lorengau, which is even more dangerous."

"It is clear that the detention centre cannot be closed by the October 31 deadline. East Lorengau cannot accommodate the number of refugees that are in the detention centre. Papua New Guinea is not willing and is unable to provide resettlement and Turnbull's US deal is doubtful.

"It is time to bring all the asylum seekers and refugees to Australia."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713



## 9. Manus protest: refugees block police entry by lying on the ground

Detainees insist they will not be forcibly removed from the centre until there is a safe place for them to go

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Friday 4 August 2017 16.43 AEST

Refugees are refusing to back down from their protest inside the Manus Island immigration detention centre, blocking the entry of police and immigration officials seeking to force them out.

PNG immigration officials and police repeatedly tried to enter the detention centre on Friday to cut the power and water supply from some compounds. The refugees blocked their entry by lying on the ground.

Australian Border Force officials and officers from the Australian federal police were also on the island, directing PNG authorities.

Power and water was earlier cut from the Foxtrot compound, but a refugee who is an electrician reconnected the power from the neighbouring Mike compound.

It has since been cut again, and refugees have been isolated from each other after guards locked the steel fences. The medical centre is not handing out medication.

The refugees have repeatedly stated they won't be forcibly removed from the detention centre until there is a safe place for them to go. They have been peacefully protesting inside the centre, chanting "Freedom" and "PNG, not safe".

The PNG and Australian governments want the detention centre closed by 31 October. But there is growing resistance among the 803 men held there to being forcibly moved to the Australian-built "refugee transit centre" in Manus's main township of Lorengau.

In recent weeks, there has been a spate of attacks on refugees in Lorengau – including several involving machetes that have left victims in hospital – and growing tensions between refugees and Manusians.

Iranian refugee and journalist Behrouz Boochani said pressure was increasingly being placed on refugees to move.

"The situation in Manus is critical today. Since this morning, police tried to come in three times but the refugees lay down in their way. Australian federal police are guiding the local police on how they can come in the Manus RPC, but the refugees are sitting down peacefully in way." He said about 50 Wilson Security guards had gathered in front of the Mike compound, the epicentre of the protests. "The guards are here, they are going to attack the detention centre. The situation is critical."

Sudanese refugee Abdul Aziz Adam said they would continue to protest at 2pm everyday, and resist being forced from the centre.

"We don't feel safe to go out to Lorengau," he said. "The protest is safe. There is no violence, although the guards are trying to scare us. But we are together."

The continued stand-off over Manus comes as the leaked transcript of a phone call in January between the Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, and the US president, Donald Trump, reveals that the US refugee resettlement deal – long promoted as the resolution to the human rights abuses occurring offshore – appears unlikely to resettle anybody.

The transcript showed Turnbull telling Trump the US administration did not have to resettle any refugees from Australia's offshore islands – as agreed – if they did not want to.

Trump described the agreement as a "stupid deal", but Turnbull pleaded with him to publicly commit to honouring it, even if he did not intend to resettle anyone.

The Manus Island detention centre was ruled illegal by the PNG supreme court more than a year ago. Australia recently agreed to pay \$70m in compensation to 1,905 men it held there for their illegal detention, and for the physical and psychological harm their detention caused.

Despite consistent revelations of physical violence – including murder – sexual abuse of women and children, allegations of torture by guards, medical neglect leading to death and catastrophic rates of mental health damage, self-harm and suicide attempts, Australia's two offshore processing centres remain operational.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/04/manus-protest-refugees-block-police-entry-by-lying-on-the-ground>



## **10. Manus Island detention centre detainees refuse to clear compound after days of protests**

ABC News Online

By Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek

Friday August 4, 2017

Asylum seekers in the Manus Island detention centre are confronting guards and police who are trying to lock gates and clear one of the accommodation compounds.

The standoff comes after three days of protests inside the centre, against attempts to force the asylum seekers to move out.

Detainees said a large group of local police and centre guards were being directed by Australian Federal Police and Australian Border Force Officers as to how to close the compounds and move the men inside.

Sudanese refugee Abdul Aziz Adam said it looked like authorities were preparing to use force to close down a main accommodation block.

"They are gathering in a big group of maybe 100 to 120 guys and they are ready," Mr Adam said.

"They brought the fire guys in front and the police guards were everywhere and they locked the gate and they are ready to come in and drag people out of Foxtrot."

He said the detainees were trying to keep things peaceful.

"We don't want to do anything because we know the consequence. We have hurt enough," he said.

Immigration authorities have told refugees inside the centre they must move into a so-called "transit centre" near the main town on Manus Island, while those men whose claims for asylum were rejected must leave PNG.

They said electricity, water and cleaning services would be progressively shut off and that PNG Police would deal with any asylum seekers or refugees "illegally occupying state property".

Most of the 700 refugees on the island are refusing to move because they believe they are not safe in the PNG community.

The Australian and PNG Governments had told the refugees the Foxtrot compound would be closed by the end of June.

Immigration officials also warned refugees that if they continue to refuse to move, it could affect their applications to resettle in the United States.

While a number of men have been interviewed for US resettlement, the US State Department said no decisions had been made about who would be resettled.

The United States also reached its new refugee intake cap and could deny entry to new refugees until the cap resets in October.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said on July 19 that the Manus Island centre would close by the end of October, even if the refugees cannot go to the US until the start of that month.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-04/manus-detention-standoff-between-asylum-seekers-and-guards/8774524>

## **11. New York Times: Refugees Refuse to Be Moved by Australia: 'We Are Not Safe Outside'**

New York Times

By MEGAN SPECIA

August 1, 2017

Hundreds of refugees and migrants living in limbo on a remote Pacific island refused Tuesday to vacate the detention facility where they have been held for years, the latest protest of their treatment under Australia's offshore detention program.

The protest was a response to cuts to water and electricity to parts of the facility on Manus Island, in Papua New Guinea, where 800 men were still being held since attempting to reach Australia by boat.

The Australian authorities want the refugees to move to a new site; the protesters say they are being aggressively relocated and denied protection.

“We are not safe outside the fences, and immigration are trying to make life impossible for us inside,” said Behrouz Boochani, a Kurdish journalist who fled Iran and has been on Manus Island since 2013. “We are protesting peacefully for our human rights, and to call on Australia to uphold its commitments to offer us protection as refugees,” he said.

Three refugees were reportedly attacked with machetes over the weekend, and Mr. Boochani posted images of their injuries to his social media accounts.

East Lorengau Refugee Transit Center, the new facility on Manus Island, is intended to temporarily house refugees awaiting resettlement. Those who are not considered refugees will be returned to their home countries.

In a video of the protest, the crowd of men can be heard shouting, “Bring power back” and “Do not kill us here.”

Mr. Boochani said that the group planned to protest again on Wednesday and that the demonstrations had remained peaceful.

The police commander on Manus, David Yapu, told the New Zealand news outlet Radio NZ that minor confrontations between the protesters and police officers had occurred in recent days.

“There was tension. We decided to withdraw,” Mr. Yapu said, saying his officers pulled back from the compound where the protest happened. “But our men are still there just to assist, to move the refugees from the Foxtrot compound.”

Foxtrot is part of the original facility, which this spring the Australian government announced it would shut down after it was deemed illegal by the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea. The migrants still living there were to be moved closer to the island’s main town, Lorengau, by the end of October.

Under Australia’s offshore detention program, asylum seekers intercepted at sea were to be housed at detention centers on Manus and on Nauru, an independent island nation to the east. The program and the conditions at the centers have been widely criticized by human rights groups and the United Nations.

In April 2016, the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea ruled that the country’s detention of people who were seeking asylum in Australia was illegal. Four months later, both governments said the detention center would be shuttered, but they did not say when or what would be done with the people being held there.

Most of the men on Manus Island have been formally recognized as refugees, but Australia refuses to allow them to be resettled.

The Obama administration had agreed to resettle hundreds of the refugees from Manus and Nauru, but this year President Trump questioned that decision.

He later confirmed he would follow through on the commitment for the one-time resettlement agreement after “extreme vetting” of the refugees, but it is unclear when this will take place.

Peter Dutton, Australia’s minister of immigration and border protection, said he initially thought the refugees would be resettled in July.

“We’re disappointed that they haven’t been able to move this month, which was my hope,” Mr. Dutton said last month. “We’re working with both the State Department and the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that we can get people off as quickly as possible.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/01/world/australia/manus-island-protests-conditions-declining.html>

## **12. MEDIA RELEASE: PNG Police try to enter Foxtrot compound**

Friday August 4, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

The standoff on Manus Island over the closure of Foxtrot Compound has come to a head this morning.

Police have shut the gates of Foxtrot to prevent any leaving or entering.

Around 10.15 this morning, police tried to enter Foxtrot.

But asylum seekers and refugees have peacefully blockaded the Foxtrot gate from the inside, so far preventing the police from entering.

"We are urgently calling on Malcolm Turnbull to end the standoff and withdraw the police. The police are being guided and supported by the Australian Border Force officers and the AFP, " said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"The leaked transcript of Turnbull's conversation with Trump has definitively exposed Turnbull's duplicity. There never was a deal that guaranteed refugees from Manus would be resettled in the US. And there is no resettlement deal with PNG. Turnbull's deal was all about domestic political posturing. He lied about them being economic refugees.

"The fate of those unlawfully imprisoned on Manus is in Australia's hands. Nothing can justify the attempt to forcibly close Foxtrot compound and to force refugees to move to East Lorengau. It's time to end the farce on Manus and bring everyone to Australia."

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

### **13. MEDIA RELEASE: Manus protests against compound closure grow**

REFUGEE SUPPORTERS DEMAND TURNBULL BRING THEM HERE

Thursday August 3, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

In the biggest demonstration yet against the arbitrary closure of Foxtrot compound, hundreds of asylum seekers and refugees have protested at the compound. (Photos attached)

Despite the threat of closure and demolition, refugees and asylum seekers are still living in Foxtrot. Refugee electricians have managed to re-establish power to the compound despite it being cut-off on Monday 31 July.

Refugees have again told Border Force that they cannot and will not move to East Lorengau because it is too dangerous.

ABF says there is only 90 days to closure and there is no option, but the government needs to act urgently to bring all the asylum seekers and refugees to Australia.

"Turnbull and Dutton must face up to the fact that PNG has no intention of resettling anyone in PNG. Nothing is gained by continuing to threaten people who have been unlawfully held on Manus Island, " said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition, "It is time to face up to their responsibilities, and bring them to safety."

The Refugee Action Coalition has called a snap "Bring Them Here" protest to demand an end to the intimidation and forced compound closures on Manus - Thursday, 3 August, 5.15 pm (for 5.30 start) at Malcolm Turnbull's office, 287 New South Head Road, Edgecliff (near Edgecliff station).

The protest will also raise the victim the tragic circumstances for asylum seekers in the Australian community that led to the attempted self-immolation by an Iranian man at the Sydney immigration office on Friday, 28 July.

There are protests on Friday 4 Aug, at Peter Dutton's office in Brisbane at 7.00am, and in Melbourne at the State Library at 5.30pm.

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

### **14. Manus death sparks concerns for refugees**

August 7, 2017 4:25pm  
Daniel McCulloch,  
Australian Associated Press

The death of a refugee on Manus Island has sparked calls for Australian authorities to intervene after what advocates have described as a preventable tragedy.

The immigration department says it is aware of the man's death, which is being investigated by PNG authorities.

The man is understood to have taken his own life in the township of Lorengau before he was due to move from detention into the Papua New Guinean community.

"More deaths are likely unless the Australian government acts immediately to bring these people, on both Manus Island and Nauru, to safety in Australia," David Berger of Doctors for Refugees said on Monday.

The Turnbull government has consistently said refugees being held in offshore detention will never settle in Australia.

Tensions are high on Manus Island, with water and electricity cut off to some compounds at the regional processing centre as authorities try to shuffle detainees around ahead of its October closure.

Adding to this is the release of a leaked transcript of Malcolm Turnbull and Donald Trump discussing a people-swap deal in January.

The prime minister assured the new president the United States was not obliged to accept a single refugee, needing only to process those held in detention to honour the bargain.

Mr Turnbull admitted Australia would rather take some of America's most "unattractive guys" than a Nobel Peace Prize winner who came by boat.

The dead man is understood to be an Iranian refugee with a history of mental illness.

"He was very sick for (a) long time but Australia did not provide medical treatment for him," Iranian journalist and Manus Island refugee Behrouz Boochani posted to Twitter.

Daniel Webb, from the Human Rights Law Centre, said the man deserved a chance to build a life in freedom and safety when he sought asylum.

Instead, he was held in a "dangerous, unsafe and painful" limbo.

"This man lost his freedom, and then he lost his hope, and now he's lost his life - it is an absolute tragedy," Mr Webb told reporters in Melbourne.

Greens immigration spokesman Nick McKim laid blame for the man's death at the feet of Immigration Minister Peter Dutton.

"This man repeatedly sought Australia's help. The Liberals ignored his pleas and now must bear responsibility for what happened," Senator McKim said.

Amnesty International is concerned he was provided inadequate health care and his safety was not paramount.

"There must be an independent, impartial, prompt and effective investigation into his death," spokesman Graham Thom said.

The refugee is the fifth man held on Manus, and the seventh in total, who has died since Australia's offshore detention regime began in 2013.

<http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/manus-death-sparks-concerns-for-refugees/news-story/4e73aa86cc33a965d42632fe8ade5e11>

## **15. Manus Island: Iranian asylum seeker death not suspicious, police say**

ABC News Online

By Papua New Guinea correspondent Eric Tlozek

Tuesday August 8, 2017

Police on Manus Island have said the death of an Iranian refugee does not appear to be suspicious, but friends and fellow asylum seekers say they are not convinced.

The body of 28-year-old Hamed Shamshiripour was found in jungle near refugee accommodation on the island on August 7.

He had been missing for two days.

The man had been living on Manus island since 2013 and had been determined under PNG law to be a refugee in 2016.

Police said his remains will be sent to Port Moresby, where a post-mortem will determine the cause of death.

Manus Province police commander David Yapu said there was no indication the man was murdered.

"At this stage, there is no suspicion of foul play in relation to his death, but the autopsy will determine the cause of his death," he said.

He rejected reports the man had suffered injuries to his face and body.

"There is no injury on his body according to our officers who were present at the crime scene and who retrieved the body," Mr Yapu said.

Other refugees and asylum seekers on the island have held a vigil for the man inside the Manus Island detention centre.

Sudanese refugee Abdul Aziz Adam said the death followed a number of attacks on refugees and asylum seekers on the island.

"Our reaction is we are very upset and we are very devastated," he said.

"It proves to us and to Immigration that this place is not really safe.

"Over the last two weeks we have seen more than seven guys that have been beaten up."

He said the refugees and asylum seekers did not believe the Iranian man took his own life.

"He's been killed, as far we know, so that is not a suicide," Mr Adam said.

Australian and Papua New Guinea immigration authorities are trying to move refugees from the detention centre to the so-called "transit centre" near the main town where the man was staying.

Refugees have been refusing to go because they believe it is not safe, and said this latest death had made them even less willing.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-08/manus-island-asylum-seeker-death-not-suspicious-police/8786304>

## **16. Justice for Hamed: Refugee advocates call for independent inquiry into Manus death**

Tuesday August 8, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

Refugee advocates are deeply concerned at PNG police statements that they have ruled out "foul play" in regard to the death of Hamed.

"It is impossible for the PNG police to rule out foul play. The hastiness of the declaration only makes it look more suspicious," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

"Anyone who has seen the photos knows that Hamed's death is suspicious. And anyone who is familiar with Hamed's circumstances, would know that the Hamed had been arrested and beaten by the local police many times. The PNG police could not be relied on to carry out a thorough or impartial investigation. There are no facilities on Manus for an autopsy," said Rintoul.

"There is an urgent need for an independent autopsy and investigation to establish the cause of death. It has been disgusting to watch the Turnbull government try to avoid its responsibility. The AFP officer was with Manus police at the scene where Hamed's body was found near the school. The Australian government is directly implicated in Hamed's death and this investigation."

Meanwhile refugees and asylum seekers held a vigil for Hamed in Delta compound inside the detention centre Monday night. (Photos attached).

The Refugee Action Coalition has called a luncheon protest for Justice for Hamed, and Bring Them Here: 12.30pm, Wednesday 9 August, Sydney Commonwealth Government offices, 1 Bligh Street, City.

For more information contact Ian Rintoul 0417 275 713

## **17. Martin McKenzie-Murray: Driven to death on Manus Island**

As the eighth asylum seeker dies in offshore processing, conditions decline further and the situation worsens for refugees. By Martin McKenzie-Murray.

The Saturday Paper  
Edition No. 169 August 12 – 18, 2017  
Martin McKenzie-Murray

This is what we know of Hamed Shamshiripour. He was 31, Iranian and homeless at the time of his death. He had been on Manus Island for four years. An asylum seeker, he had been negatively vetted. In the past year, following a major mental

health episode, he was shuttled carelessly between the regional processing centre, the nearby transit centre, prison and the streets. His mental health problems were severe, and well known to officials. The Australian Border Force's chief medical officer was alerted 12 months ago. In January, Manus MP Ron Knight said of Hamed: "To be blunt, the guy is dangerous to all around him and he needs psychiatric help. There is none for him here."

We know that Hamed was volatile, violent and paranoid. He would sometimes wander camps – or the streets – naked, mumbling about enemies and his divinity. He told friends, who had become both pitying and frightened of him, that local police beat him "for fun". Days before his body was found, The Saturday Paper understands he made a separate attempt on his life.

We know that on Monday, about 9am local time, refugees found his body in a forest. We know that a photo of his corpse – showing how he died – encouraged suspicions among asylum seekers that he was murdered. The photograph is haunting. Hamed's head is shaved, his eye sockets black with blood or bruising. His family is demanding an inquest. "It don't seem like suicide," Hamed's best friend, Farzan, tells me. "I think he has been murdered. It's really suspicious. How can we provide a third party to investigate this case?"

Hamed was ill, apparently suicidal, and his death ruled self-administered, but his friends glimpsed his death through their own distrust. If there was no evidence of Hamed's murder, there was plenty to support his friends' darkest misgivings: only three months earlier their camp had been fired on with machineguns aimed by drunken members of the local navy.

Distrust in authorities is common among these men. The distrust is a mix of fact and fantasy. Another friend of Hamed's told me: "Man, I don't know if I'll walk out of here alive. I think they are working for a mass elimination plan. To get rid of all of us at once. I mean to kill us all here. We have already lost five men just on Manus, and a handful on Nauru. Don't you think it's a sign?"

FULL STORY AT <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2017/08/12/driven-death-manus-island/1502460005062>

## **18. Angry Labor MPs confront shadow minister in secret meeting over 'silence' on refugee death**

Canberra Times  
August 11 2017 - 8:46AM  
Michael Koziol

An angry delegation of Labor MPs confronted opposition immigration spokesman Shayne Neumann on Wednesday night about what they view as Labor's silence on Australia's offshore detention of refugees.

In a sign of the growing unrest within Labor's Left faction over refugees, four MPs - Andrew Giles, and senators Murray Watt, Jenny McAllister and Sue Lines - visited Mr Neumann in his parliamentary office to voice their concerns.

They believe he has vacated the field to Immigration Minister Peter Dutton, and were particularly aggrieved by Labor's failure to condemn the government over the death on Monday of 31-year-old asylum seeker Hamed Shamshiripour on Manus Island.

One MP with knowledge of the meeting complained: "Nothing's really been said by Shayne. We need to respond. We're all really upset and concerned."

An MP who attended said the meeting was held to voice "concerns that a larger number of MPs have about the ongoing situation on Manus and Nauru".

"It wasn't so much about attacking him or attacking Labor, but making sure that we are taking an active role in the debate and demonstrating our concern for people who are in detention," the source said. It was a "constructive" meeting and "I think he appreciated us coming to him," they said.

A spokesman for Mr Neumann said: "The shadow minister regularly meets with colleagues to discuss issues related to his portfolio and he had a productive meeting."

All the attendees were approached for comment.

Fairfax Media understands there are active discussions within Labor, particularly MPs in the party's Left faction, about changing Labor's asylum seeker policies with a view to making them more compassionate.

They are pointing to next year's ALP national conference as an opportunity to push for a substantive shift in policy, although not all in the Left believe that's possible.

It is understood MPs are anxious to demonstrate greater concern for people stuck on the islands, and to better articulate the government's failure to resettle refugees after more than four years.

Outspoken Labor senator Lisa Singh, a long-time refugee advocate, said the government should investigate the death of Mr Shamshiripour.

"That's the usual procedure when you have the duty of care," she said. "This is a shameful chapter in our history."

Meanwhile on Wednesday night, Labor senator Sam Dastyari railed against the lengthy detention of refugees during a free-wheeling "politics in the pub" session at the Civic Pub in Canberra.

While his comments were in line with current Labor policy, he promised Labor would seek a "fundamental shift" in the way refugees who come by boat are processed.

"This is what I believe we need to take to the next election and I believe we will take to the next election," Senator Dastyari said.

"To start off, you open up the camps. You bring transparency, you actually process these people, and you start actually finding a place for these people to go. I think that is a huge change from what we're doing at the moment."

Senator Dastyari, of the NSW Right, said the refugee debate in Australia had become "messed up" and was based on the idea that "if we deny one group of people's rights enough, that somehow this actually saves lives, this is right thing to do and it's the moral thing to do".

"Piss off. No," he said. "None of this is okay and it's not good enough for us as a society."

Senator Dastyari lamented the death of Mr Shamshiripour in the "mosquito-infested swamp that is Manus [Island]", telling the supportive pub crowd: "You can't look at that and not ask yourself, how is that OK?"

On Thursday, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton would not take responsibility for the death, but said: "The loss of one life is one too many, and I'm determined to get people off Manus, [and] to do it in such a way that we don't restart boats."

Mr Dutton said there would be a coronial inquest into the death.

"I don't want people on Manus Island," he said. "I didn't put people on Manus Island. My responsibility was to clean up the mess that was left to us by Labor. The important thing is that we aren't adding to the numbers on Manus Island."

During Wednesday night's book launch with The Australia Institute, Senator Dastyari also opened up about a "flippant" phone call he had in 2013 with then prime minister Kevin Rudd when the former Labor government announced the so-called Papua New Guinea solution.

"Kevin calls me. It was one of those flippant conversations," Senator Dastyari recounted. "He goes to me, 'We've got a plan, we're going to fix the refugee problem'."

"Fix has a very distinct meaning in machine politics. Fix means we're going to make the problem go away."

"I was probably on the phone to Kevin for three or four minutes. You kind of hang up and walk away."

"You realise a year later: holy f---. We had a conversation which was prior to us making a decision [about] what is going to be the defining moment in so many people's lives."

"And we just kind of flippantly dealt with it on the phone as a kind of passing thing."

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/angry-labor-mps-confront-shadow-minister-in-secret-meeting-over-silence-on-refugee-death-20170810-gxt5mw.html>

## **19. Border force doctor knew of Manus asylum seeker's deteriorating health before death**

Dr John Brayley had said he would investigate mental health of Iranian Hamed Shamshiripour, who was found dead near the Australian-run transit centre

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Wednesday 9 August 2017 04.00 AEST

Australian Border Force's chief medical officer Dr John Brayley was personally told about Hamed Shamshiripour's deteriorating mental health more than a year ago, and said he would review his care and records.



Shamshiripour, an asylum seeker from Iran, was found dead on Manus Island on Monday morning, in forest near to the refugee transit centre where he was being held.

For more than a year, refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island, advocates in Australia, and mental health professionals working within the detention centre, repeatedly raised concerns about Shamshiripour's deteriorating mental health, chaotic behaviour and psychotic episodes.

The Papua New Guinea police commissioner, Gary Baki, told reporters Shamshiripour committed suicide, but refugees on Manus Island have called for an autopsy to determine his cause of death, alleging Shamshiripour had regularly clashed with members of the public and may have been attacked.

Police established a crime scene near the East Lorengau school where Shamshiripour's body was found.

Shamshiripour's "chaotic presentation", "erratic and unpredictable behaviour" and "unstable state" were the subject of repeated entreaties from health professionals during his time on Manus.

Brayley, the doctor charged with overseeing the health of all people held in immigration detention, was personally informed in August 2016 that Shamshiripour's health was declining precipitously and he was in danger of serious harm.

In a letter Brayley wrote and signed on 26 August 2016, he said he had been alerted to concerns over Shamshiripour's mental health management and had requested his file.

Email correspondence from Brayley's executive assistant said Shamshiripour's case was being "actively monitored" by Brayley personally.

Brayley was again personally told – by email to his individual account – of Shamshiripour's declining health in December.

Brayley declined an interview with the Guardian on Tuesday. The Department of Immigration and Border Protection did not respond to a series of questions from the Guardian about what actions were taken by Brayley and the department in Shamshiripour's case.

Shamshiripour's deteriorating mental health condition was reported by case managers and health professionals on Manus Island, who said he had "become a danger to stakeholders and residents alike with his erratic and unpredictable behaviour".

He was the subject of repeated reports from guards, case managers and mental health professionals within the Manus Island detention centre.

However, after a number of psychotic episodes, Shamshiripour was arrested and jailed for a month in Lorengau.

Fourteen fellow asylum seekers and refugees lodged a complaint that Shamshiripour was arrested and beaten instead of being treated.

In the wake of Shamshiripour's death, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees warned of an "escalating crisis" on Manus Island and said the forcible closure of the detention centre – without any viable alternative – was causing "acute distress among refugees and asylum-seekers".

The UNHCR said it was deeply saddened by Shamshiripour's death, and said it highlighted the precarious situation faced by vulnerable people on Manus Island.

"The planned closure of the centre, along with the announced withdrawal of current medical care, torture and trauma support and security services by October 2017, is exacerbating a highly stressful situation for the 773 people who remain on Manus Island," a spokeswoman said. "Many fear for their safety outside the centre, particularly in the wake of several violent incidents in recent years."

The UNHCR reiterated its call for Australia to find "viable, humane solutions" outside of PNG and Nauru for those still held in offshore processing.

In parliament, the Greens senator, Nick McKim, called for Shamshiripour's body to be brought to Australia for an independent autopsy.

"It's important that people, including Hamed's fellow detainees, have confidence in the autopsy's findings," McKim said.

"Hamed was Australia's prisoner, and it is the Australian government's responsibility to determine exactly how he died."

The Refugee Action Coalition have also called for an independent investigation into Shamshiripour's death, saying it was impossible for PNG police to so quickly rule out foul play.

Photos are in circulation purportedly showing Shamshiripour's body when it was found. The Guardian has chosen not to publish these.

"Anyone who has seen the photos knows that Hamed's death is suspicious," spokesman Ian Rintoul said. "And anyone who is familiar with Hamed's circumstances, would know that Hamed had been arrested and beaten by the local police many times. The PNG police could not be relied on to carry out a thorough or impartial investigation. There are no facilities on Manus for an autopsy.

"There is an urgent need for an independent autopsy and investigation to establish the cause of death. It has been disgusting to watch the Turnbull government try to avoid its responsibility."

A refugee held on Manus Island has reportedly been transferred to Port Moresby in a critical condition.

The refugee was reportedly attacked on Manus Island several days ago and is suffering serious head injuries. Calls to PNG immigration about the man's conditions have not been returned.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2017/aug/09/border-force-doctor-knew-of-manus-asylum-seekers-deteriorating-health-before-death>

## **20. Julian Burnside: The leaked transcript of Turnbull's call with Trump shows him at his worst**

Turnbull's government has called refugees "illegal" and treats them as criminals. It is a lie on which the Coalition has made itself popular

The Guardian  
Julian Burnside  
Saturday 5 August 2017 08.00 AEST

About a week after Donald Trump was inaugurated as president of the United States, he had a phone conversation with Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull. The call focused on the deal earlier done with the Obama administration, under which the US would take a number of refugees currently held in Australian offshore detention centres on Papua New Guinea's Manus island and Nauru, and Australia would receive a corresponding number of people the US wanted to resettle elsewhere.

At the time the deal was disclosed, its terms were very vague. In particular, no numbers were given: no one could tell just how many people from Nauru or Manus would be resettled in the US.

The transcript of the phone call, released by the Washington Post, discloses several uncomfortable things. Firstly, the number to be resettled in the US is entirely up to them (according to Turnbull). More fundamentally, Turnbull's discussion with Trump is troubling because it shows that Turnbull has so little understanding of refugee issues and so little concern for the Christian faith he claims to follow.

Trump was obviously confused about the number of refugees covered by the deal. Turnbull made it clear that the US could, if they wished, take none at all. He said:

"...The obligation is for the United States to look and examine and take up to and only if they so choose – 1,250 to 2,000. Every individual is subject to your vetting. You can decide to take them or to not take them after vetting. You can decide to take 1,000 or 100. It is entirely up to you. The obligation is to only go through the process...."

So, Turnbull told the president of the United States that all the deal required was that the Americans go through the vetting process, and if eventually they took no refugees at all, that would be consistent with the deal. Of course, it was not consistent with the way the deal had been described to Australians when it was first made public. In November 2016, Turnbull refused to say how many people would be resettled under the deal, but gave the impression that America was committed to taking a non-trivial number.

Trump expressed his concern about the possibility that the refugees might be terrorists. He said:

"TRUMP .... This ISIS thing – it is something we are going to devote a lot of energy to it. I think we are going to be very successful.

TURNBULL: Absolutely. We have, as you know, taken a very strong line on national security and border protection here..."

Trump referred to the fact that the US had once received a number of prisoners who had been released by Castro in Cuba and went on to underline his concern that the refugees might be terrorists. He said:

“TRUMP:.... you remember the Mariel boat lift, where Castro let everyone out of prison and Jimmy Carter accepted them with open arms. These were brutal people. Nobody said Castro was stupid, but now what are we talking about is 2,000 people that are actually imprisoned and that would actually come into the United States. ... We have our San Bernardino's, we have had the World Trade Center come down because of people that should not have been in our country, and now we are supposed to take 2,000. It sends such a bad signal. You have no idea. It is such a bad thing.

TURNBULL: ...none of these people are from the conflict zone. They are basically economic refugees from Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. That is the vast bulk of them. They have been under our supervision for over three years now and we know exactly everything about them....”

This did nothing to alter Trump's view. The conversation continued:

“TRUMP: ...I will be honest with you. I hate taking these people. I guarantee you they are bad. That is why they are in prison right now. They are not going to be wonderful people who go on to work for the local milk people.

TURNBULL: I would not be so sure about that. They are basically —

TRUMP: Well, maybe you should let them out of prison. I am doing this because Obama made a bad deal. ...”

Clearly Trump believed he was being asked to resettle criminals. He seems not to understand that a country like Australia would imprison innocent people for years. Turnbull, despite his experience as an advocate, did nothing to dispel Trump's misunderstanding and said nothing to justify jailing innocent people for years. After all, what sort of government would do that?

Turnbull must know that the Australian public are labouring under the belief that people seeking asylum are “illegal”. His government has called them “illegal” and, by treating them as criminals, has induced the public to believe they are criminals. It must be obvious to Turnbull that his party's treatment of people seeking asylum since 2001 has led the US president, and most of Australia, to believe that the people held on Manus and Nauru are criminals. It is the lie on which the Coalition has made itself popular. It is the lie which is essential if the public is not to see the grotesque hypocrisy of self-styled Christians locking up innocent people for years as a warning to others.

Presumably Turnbull understands that boat people are not criminals, but prefers not to say so. But worse: he referred to them as “economic refugees”. It is a meaningless term. A person who is just looking for economic advantage is not a refugee. A refugee is a person who is unwilling to return to their country of origin because of a “well-founded fear of persecution”. It has got nothing at all to do with seeking economic advantage.

In short, what the transcript shows is that Turnbull is unclear about what a refugee is; he is willing to punish innocent people for years in order to deter other people from seeking asylum, and he is content that the Australian public continue to believe that boat people are punished because they are criminals, when the truth is that they are innocent people being mistreated as an example to deter others from seeking help in Australia.

It is not surprising that Turnbull is troubled about the release of the transcript: it shows him at his worst.

--->>> *Julian Burnside QC is a barrister who specialises in commercial litigation and is also deeply involved in human-rights work, in particular in relation to refugees. His new book Watching Out: reflections on justice and injustice is out now through Scribe.*

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/05/the-leaked-transcript-of-turnbulls-call-with-trump-shows-him-at-his-worst>

## 21. What we've learned from the Trump-Turnbull call transcript

Analysis: White House leak reveals more about refugee swap deal than Australia's leader has ever shared with his people

The Guardian  
Ben Doherty  
Friday 4 August 2017 10.24 AEST

In a hostile phone call with Donald Trump, Malcolm Turnbull has revealed more about the controversial US refugee swap deal than he ever shared with the Australian people.

A leaked transcript of the January phone call, which neither man thought would become public, confirms reports that the US president and the Australian prime minister clashed over the controversial deal, brokered by Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, and that Turnbull sought to cajole Trump into accepting it.

"We are taking people from the previous administration that they were very keen on getting out of the United States. We will take more. We will take anyone that you want us to take. The only people that we do not take are people who come by boat. So we would rather take a not-very-attractive guy that helps you out than to take a Nobel Peace Prize winner that comes by boat."

Turnbull's call raises significant questions about Australia's acceptance of Central American refugees. There are 31 people – from seven cases, understood to be family groups – who are being considered for resettlement. The phone call raises the question of why the Obama administration was “very keen on getting [them] out of the United States”? Who are these people? And why is the US so anxious to move them elsewhere?

### ***Australia does control its offshore immigration detention centres***

For four years of offshore detention, the Australian government has consistently maintained that violence, physical and sexual abuse on the islands were “matters for the governments of PNG and Nauru”. This has been rejected by human rights groups, the United Nations and other national governments, who argue Australia has financial and operational control of the centres, and a legal and moral responsibility for the people it has sent offshore.

In his phone call with Trump, Turnbull conceded Australia does have full control over the refugees.

"They have been under our supervision for over three years now and we know exactly everything about them ... They have been on Nauru or Manus for over three years and the only reason we cannot let them into Australia is because of our commitment to not allow people to come by boat. Otherwise we would have let them in. If they had arrived by airplane and with a tourist visa then they would be here."

### ***Turnbull falsely claimed those held on Australia's offshore islands were 'economic refugees'***

"They are basically economic refugees from Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. That is the vast bulk of them."

There is no such thing as an economic refugee. The word refugee has a strict legal definition, defined under the refugees convention, as a person, outside their country of nationality, who faces a “well-founded fear of persecution” on any of five grounds: race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Economic hardship is not a criterion for refugee status.

All the people being considered for resettlement in the US have undergone an extensive refugee status determination and have been found to be refugees. They all have a “well-founded fear of persecution” and are legally owed protection by Australia, the country in which they sought asylum.

### ***Australia's refugee resettlement program from the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts was discriminatory in favour of Christians***

Australia accepted 12,000 refugees from the Syrian and Iraq conflicts, additional to its annual humanitarian intake. Turnbull explicitly told Trump Christians were preferred over Muslims:

"This is exactly what we have done with the program to bring in 12,000 Syrian refugees, 90 per cent of which will be Christians. It will be quite deliberate and the position I have taken — I have been very open about it — is that it is a tragic fact of life that when the situation in the Middle East settles down — the people that are going to be most unlikely to have a continuing home are those Christian minorities."

Australia has been criticised for its preference for Christian refugees. Refugees are usually accepted for resettlement on the basis of greatest need – those facing the most acute circumstances, often women and children, are resettled first.

Christians do face persecution in Iraq and Syria – large numbers of Christians have fled both countries – but Muslims, particularly ethnic or sectarian minorities, also face severe persecution and are a much larger population.

Statistics released under freedom of information laws show that 78% of those resettled from Syria and Iraq between July 2015 and January 2017 identified as Christian.

Christians are less than 0.1% of the Iraqi population and 10% of the Syrian.

And Australia's intake is disproportionate too, to the presence of Christians among the region's displaced. The UN high commissioner for refugees estimates the number of Christian refugees from Iraq at 15% and from Syria at less than 1%.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/04/what-weve-learned-from-the-trump-turnbull-call-transcript>

## **22. Leaked Trump transcripts show his incoherent, ill-informed narcissism**

The leak of conversations between the US president and the leaders of Mexico and Australia may well be a cry for help from within the administration

The Guardian  
Julian Borger in Washington

Friday 4 August 2017 04.10 AEST

One of the most significant aspects of the published transcripts of Donald Trump's conversations with his Mexican and Australian counterparts is the fact they were leaked.

Private discussions between world leaders are kept secret so they can speak their minds and establish trust. The leaks will make it harder for the US to carry out high-level diplomacy and resolve serious crises, not just under Trump but potentially far beyond his presidency.

The publication of transcripts by the Washington Post is the latest of many signs that established norms are breaking down inside the administration, with far-reaching and unpredictable implications.

Such documents should have been very closely held, accessible to only a few senior officials. Their publication reflects the intensity of the war inside the White House between rival factions – and a reminder that, for all his well-advertised toughness, the new chief of staff, John Kelly, is going to find it very hard to impose discipline on an institution that is dysfunctional from the top down.

It is quite possible that the leaker was motivated by anxiety about the national security implications of Trump's erratic leadership – that the leak is a cry for help from inside the administration.

The transcripts of his conversations with Enrique Peña Nieto and Malcolm Turnbull show the president to be no more coherent in private than he is public: ill-informed – even about a major attack on US soil – and narcissistic to the point of absurdity.

"I am the world's greatest person," he tells Turnbull, and boasts to his fellow world leaders about the size of the crowds who turn out to hear him speak. Maintaining his image as a strong leader in the eyes of his supporters emerges, again and again in the course of the conversations, as an overarching priority – over and above the maintenance of strong relations with allied countries.

The transcripts serve as a reminder that being "nice" to Trump counts for more than long-term strategic alliances. At one point in his castigation of Turnbull, he compared him unfavourably with Vladimir Putin, with whom Trump had recently spoken.

"Putin was a pleasant call. This is ridiculous," Trump said shortly before ending the call abruptly. In private as in public, Trump's praise for the Russian president is an unshakeable constant.

Perhaps the least surprising upshot of the release of the transcripts is the confirmation that the president and his administration deliberately misled the public about them. When the Washington Post published an account of the Turnbull conversation in early February, Trump tweeted that it had been a "very civil conversation that FAKE NEWS media lied about".

As has happened repeatedly over the course of the administration, the emergence of the facts has upheld the news reports, and shown the denials to be fake. Trump repeatedly tries to coach Peña Nieto on how to mislead the press, urging him to stop repeating Mexico's refusal to pay for Trump's proposed border wall.

The wall and its supposed Mexican funding was a mainstay of Trump campaign speeches. In private, Trump tells the Mexican leader to stop reminding voters of a promise the new president cannot fulfil. He argues the wall and its financing is "the least important thing that we are talking about" and says he is in a "political bind" because he had "been talking about it for a two-year period".

Similar themes recur in the Turnbull conversation. Here, the divisive issue is an agreement that the Obama administration struck with Australia to consider accepting 1,250 refugees, mostly from Muslim countries, being detained by Australia on Pacific islands after trying to enter the country by boat. In return, Australia would host Latin American migrants.

Trump is furious that abiding by the agreement could harm his image among his voters, just after he had signed his first abortive executive order cutting the acceptance of refugees from Syria and suspending travel from a list of seven mainly Muslim countries.

"This is going to kill me. I am the world's greatest person that does not want to let people into the country," Trump says. "It makes me look so bad, and I have only been here a week." The fact that the refugees in question are from Muslim countries is the key for Trump. "I hate taking these people. I guarantee you they are bad," he said.

Turnbull pleads with him to stick to the agreement for the sake of the bilateral relationship and in the end, Trump agrees he does not have much choice, but does so with little grace, aiming a personal slight at the Australian, saying he had "brokered many a stupid deal in business".

For all Turnbull's attempts to smooth over their differences, Trump is clearly in a foul temper by the end of the discussion, and broader bilateral issues are shelved. When Turnbull asks to discuss Syria and North Korea – two global crises in which their two countries are strategic partners – Trump is not interested and ends the call.

## 23. Malcolm Turnbull contradicts public claims on US refugee deal in leaked Donald Trump transcript

Canberra Times  
August 4 2017 - 12:42PM  
Michael Koziol

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has been caught out after a leaked transcript of his phone call with US President Donald Trump showed Australia's agreement to take refugees from Central America was part of a quid-pro-quo arrangement even though the government has long denied such a deal.

Greens immigration spokesman Nick McKim on Friday accused Mr Turnbull of lying about the nature of the agreement.

"His confession to Trump that it is a people swap shows his duplicity and lays bare the contempt he has for the Australian people and the truth," Senator McKim said.

However, government sources insisted the two arrangements were negotiated separately and at different times, and did not represent a "refugee swap". They said Mr Turnbull raised the Central American matter only to convince Mr Trump to honour the deal.

The transcript also revealed Mr Turnbull assured the President the US could take as few as 100 or zero refugees from Manus Island and Nauru once they were subjected to extreme vetting.

In it, the Prime Minister promised Australia would "hold up our end of the bargain by taking in our country [people] that you need to move on from", an apparent reference to Central American refugees currently living in Costa Rica.

He then went further, offering to "take more" people and "take anyone that you want us to take" as long as they did not come by boat.

"We would rather take a not-very-attractive guy that [helps] you out than to take a Nobel Peace Prize winner that comes by boat," Mr Turnbull said according to the transcript, which was obtained and reproduced by The Washington Post.

When previously asked about the agreement to take Central American refugees, the Turnbull government has maintained it had nothing to do with the Obama-era deal for the US to accept refugees from Manus Island and Nauru.

In September last year, before the US deal was announced, Mr Turnbull said Australia's acceptance of refugees from Costa Rica was "not linked to any other resettlement discussions" and was "not connected to any other arrangements".

Months later, after the US deal was announced, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said: "The Costa Rica arrangement had nothing to do with this deal and it's not a people swap."

Labor's immigration spokesman Shayne Neumann said the government needed to "come clean" because Mr Turnbull's comments in the transcript "make clear that the two agreements are linked".

The leaked transcript of the phone call, which took place after Mr Trump was inaugurated in January, will also deeply concern refugees awaiting resettlement because it confirms the US is not obliged to accept even a single refugee.

Mr Turnbull assured Mr Trump that, while the target was for the US to take 1250 people, it could take as few as 100 or even zero, and still honour the deal.

"The agreement ... does not require you to take 2000 people. It does not require you to take any," he told the President.

"The obligation is for the United States to look and examine and take up to and only if they so choose – 1250 to 2000. Every individual is subject to your vetting.

"You can decide to take them or to not take them after vetting. You can decide to take 1000 or 100. It is entirely up to you. The obligation is to only go through the process."

Mr Trump, who repeatedly branded the deal as "stupid" and "rotten", asked Mr Turnbull about the possibility the US could vet the refugees and decide not to accept any.

Mr Turnbull replied "that is the point I have been trying to make", but noted he expected both the US and Australia to act "in good faith".

The two leaders' forthright conversation salvaged the deal, in a major win for the Turnbull government, which wants to clear the camps on Nauru and Manus Island by either resettling refugees in the US, Papua New Guinea or Cambodia, and convincing others to go home.

No refugees have yet been accepted by the US, although the Department of Immigration and Border Protection told the Senate in May that applicants were progressing through the final stages of the process.

Mr Turnbull has previously acknowledged the US was not bound to take 1250 refugees, a figure first revealed by former White House spokesman Sean Spicer.

"It is possible that they could take a smaller number or a larger number," Mr Turnbull told 3AW radio in February.

Environment Minister Josh Frydenberg told Sky News on Friday it was "absolutely wrong" to imply Mr Turnbull had given Mr Trump a get-out-of-jail card by telling him the US was only obliged to go through the motions.

"The Prime Minister stood up for Australia's interests, he stood up for the deal that he had agreed with the Obama administration," Mr Frydenberg said.

Senator McKim said the leaked transcript would plunge refugees awaiting resettlement on Nauru and Manus Island into further uncertainty and distress.

"It places the hopes of all the people on Manus Island and Nauru into terrible limbo," he said.

Senator McKim said the transcript put paid to the government's claim that the US deal was not part of a "people swap".

"It's clearly confirmation that Australia under the Liberals is treating refugees as less than human and as pawns to use in making deals, rather than people to whom we owe a duty of care," he said.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/malcolm-turnbull-contradicts-public-claims-on-us-refugee-deal-in-leaked-donald-trump-transcript-20170803-gxp295.html>

## **24. Trump-Turnbull phone call transcript exposes 'gaping holes' in refugee deal, human rights groups say**

ABC News Online

By political reporter Stephen Dziedzic

Friday August 4, 2017

The leaked transcript of Malcolm Turnbull's fiery January phone call with Donald Trump has drawn a furious political reaction from human rights groups, who say it has exposed "gaping holes" in the US refugee deal.

The transcript shows Mr Turnbull repeatedly pressed Mr Trump to stick with the agreement while the US President berated him about it.

But the Prime Minister also emphasised the US was not obliged to take any refugees under the deal, and simply had to vet them for resettlement.

Daniel Webb, director of legal advocacy at the Human Rights Law Centre, said the refugee deal was "full of holes".

"The best proof, as they say, is in the pudding," he said.

"It's eight months since this deal was announced and not one single refugee in Manus or Nauru has received safety under it.

"That doesn't look like it's changing any time soon ... it looks like Malcolm Turnbull was pre-occupied with maintaining the facade of this deal."

Coalition frontbencher Josh Frydenberg denied that outright.

"The Prime Minister stood up for Australia's interests, he stood up for the deal he agreed with the Obama administration, and he made that point very forcefully as we already knew," Mr Frydenberg said.

"Quite clearly that is what we expect of our Prime Minister and that's what he's done."

But Mr Webb said the transcript highlighted the ongoing uncertainty about the agreement, which would take a psychological toll on refugees.



"When this deal was announced, for the first time in years you could hear some fleeting hope in the voices of the men on Manus and the families on Nauru," Mr Webb said.

"They thought finally the Government was acknowledging it couldn't just abandon them indefinitely. Having those hopes dashed again will be deeply painful."

Greens senator Nick McKim said the transcript also exposed that the US refugee deal was part of a people swap, despite the Government's denials.

The Government has agreed to resettle refugees from Central America, but has maintained that was not connected to the US refugee deal.

In the leaked transcript Mr Turnbull tells Mr Trump that Australia would take "anyone that you want us to take" if America honoured the refugee deal.

"Malcolm Turnbull has spent 10 months denying that Australia's engaged in a people swap with the US. This transcript ... puts the lie to what Mr Turnbull has said about this deal," Senator McKim said.

"The inhumanity with which Malcolm Turnbull speaks about refugees is absolutely shocking."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-04/trump-turnbull-transcript-refugee-deal-human-rights-groups/8774180>

## **25. Leaked Malcolm Turnbull admission to Donald Trump leaves refugees in despair**

Canberra Times  
August 4 2017 - 7:00PM  
Michael Koziol

Refugees and advocates are in despair over Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's admission, revealed in a leaked transcript, that Donald Trump could take as few as 100 or even zero refugees from Manus Island and Nauru under the US refugee deal.

They have also accused Mr Turnbull of lying when he insisted Australia's acceptance of refugees from Central America was unrelated to the US deal and did not constitute a "people swap", claims that have been undermined by the leaked document.

During his explosive phone call with President Trump in January, a transcript of which was obtained by The Washington Post, Mr Turnbull won over the reluctant President by assuring him the US was not bound to accept a single refugee.

"The agreement ... does not require you to take 2000 people. It does not require you to take any," he told Mr Trump. "The obligation is for the United States to look and examine and take up to and only if they so choose – 1250 to 2000. Every individual is subject to your vetting.

"You can decide to take them or to not take them after vetting. You can decide to take 1000 or 100. It is entirely up to you. The obligation is to only go through the process."

Those words have angered refugee advocates and alarmed refugees themselves, who were peacefully demonstrating on Friday afternoon under the close watch of police.

Refugee Action Coalition spokesman Ian Rintoul said the remarks showed "it has never been a substantial deal" and was "an appalling scam perpetrated on the refugees and the Australian people".

Iranian refugee and journalist Behrouz Boochani, who is on Manus Island, described the arrangement as "a fake deal ... to waste time". "I'm sure that there is not any option to send people to America," he said.

He said refugees were in despair as authorities begin to shut down the regional processing centre, which is due to close by October 31. "The situation is critical," he said.

No refugees have been accepted by the US, however, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection told the Senate in May that dozens of refugees were now in the final stages of the application process.

Mr Turnbull on Friday noted the arrangement "has always been subject to American vetting procedures". "It's always better when these conversations remain confidential", he said, but would not comment further on the "supposed transcript".

During the phone call, Mr Turnbull linked the deal to Australia's acceptance of a group of Central American refugees living in Costa Rica. This agreement pre-dated the US deal and the government has denied the two arrangements amount to a "people swap".

But Mr Turnbull promised President Trump that Australia would "hold up our end of the bargain by taking in our country [people] that you need to move on from". He went further, offering to "take anyone that you want us to take" as long as they did not arrive by boat.

The deal "requires, in return, for us to do a number of things for the United States", Mr Turnbull said, without detailing the "things".

Government sources insisted the two arrangements were negotiated separately and at different times. They said Mr Turnbull only raised the Central America matter to help convince President Trump to honour the deal.

But Labor and the Greens seized on the transcript as proof of a "people swap", with shadow immigration minister Shayne Neumann calling on the government to "come clean".

Greens immigration spokesman Nick McKim said Mr Turnbull had been caught telling "a very clear lie".

"His confession to Trump that it is a people swap shows his duplicity and lays bare the contempt he has for the Australian people and the truth," Senator McKim told Fairfax Media.

Government sources expressed confidence that the deal for the US to take screened refugees from Manus and Nauru would not be affected by the latest ructions caused by the leak of the transcript.

Sources also said that the relationship between Mr Turnbull and Mr Trump had been good during their subsequent meetings.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/leaked-malcolm-turnbull-admission-to-donald-trump-leaves-refugees-in-despair-20170804-gxpluz.html>

## **26. Nauru security guard charged, sacked after alleged attack on refugee**

ABC News Online  
By Michael Walsh  
Saturday 5 August 2017

A Nauruan security guard has been charged after allegedly assaulting a refugee at the settlement camp he was employed to protect.

The incident at the Anibare Lodge refugee accommodation area happened about midnight local time on Wednesday morning.

Police charged Nauruan man Brnton Namaduk, who was employed by an Australian company hired by the Nauruan government to provide security at the site.

In a statement, the Nauruan Government did not specify what crime police had charged Namaduk with, or the name of the company that employed him.

He allegedly attacked Kamal Parvez, a 27-year-old Bangladeshi refugee, who was later taken to the Republic of Nauru Hospital to receive treatment for facial injuries.

Mr Parvez had just returned to the accommodation site when the incident occurred.

"As soon as I got in my room he came straight away and he kicked the door, and he carried a bottle of vodka," Mr Parvez told the ABC.

"He was completely smashed, out of control."

In video footage shot by a resident of the refugee camp, neighbours can be seen attempting to restrain Namaduk as he grabs and knees Mr Parvez in the stomach area.

"He started to grab my collar, and then I tried to hold him but he's a very tough guy so I couldn't," Mr Parvez said.

"All of my neighbours, they woke up and they tried to hold him but couldn't."

Mr Parvez alleges Namaduk punched him multiple times and later struck him with a liquor bottle.

Police were called to the scene and arrested Namaduk, and his employment at the site has been terminated.

In its statement, the Nauru Government said it understood the incident was "not random ... but connected to a relationship between the refugee and a female relative of the Nauruan man".

Mr Parvez denied that claim, and said he is not in a relationship with a Nauruan woman.

## 27. MEDIA RELEASE: Nauru arrests as protests escalate

Wednesday August 9, 2017  
Refugee Action Coalition  
Ian Rintoul  
mobile 0417 275 713

Although overshadowed by Hamed's tragic death on Manus, for several days, since the revelations of the transcript of the Trump-Turnbull conversation have sparked protests on Australia's other offshore detention island, Nauru.

On Tuesday, 8n August, an unprecedented peaceful protest at OPC 1, the administrative centre of the detention camps in Nauru was attacked by the Nauruan police. (Video clip attached). The protesters stood by the side of the road, chanting "Freedom."

Although it was a peaceful protest and no-one was blocking the road, it is reported that five people, including a Sri Lankan and Somali refugees, were arrested and beaten by the Nauruan police.

It has brought memories of the dramatic demonstrations, and police repression of the mass refugee protests in 2015.

In recent days, protests have spread across the camps and settlements on Nauru. On 3 August there was a protest at Beach House, in front of immigration offices. Other protests have taken place at various refugee settlements.

A photo of the protest at OPC 3, the detention camp, from Monday night (7 August) the detention camp is attached. Chants included "Shut Down Offshore."

"People on Nauru have run out of patience. The hopes people had of being resettled in the US have been dashed by the unednign delays and the lies they have been told by Malcolm Turnbull, Peter Dutton that have been passed all the way down the line to immigration officers on Nauru," said Ian Rintoul, spokesperson for the Refugee Action Coalition.

The Refugee Action Coalition has called a lunctime protest for Justice for Hamed, and Evacuate Manus, Bring Them Here : 12.30pm, Wednesday 9 August, Sydney Commonwealth Government offices, 1 Bligh Street, City. Speakers include, Greens MP David Shoebridge; George Newhouse; Mums for Refugees.

For more information contact Ian Rintoul, 0417 275 713

## 28. Sunshine Fruit Market former owner fined for underpaying Afghani refugee

ABC Online News  
Wednesday August 1, 2017

The former owner of a Melbourne fruit shop has been handed a record fine for underpaying an Afghani refugee who went weeks without wages.

Fair Work Australia fined Abdulrahman Taleb, the former owner and operator of Sunshine Fruit Market in Sunshine, about \$16,000 and his company \$644,000 for deliberately ignoring warnings about pay rates and withholding pay.

The Federal Circuit Court found the worker, who was a refugee from Afghanistan and spoke little English, was paid nothing for a number of weeks in 2012. He was later paid a flat rate of \$10 per hour to the maximum of \$120 a day for stacking and moving fruit and vegetables. He should have received a normal rate of \$17 per hour and \$38 on weekends and \$43 on public holidays.

Fair Work Australia said the worker was underpaid a total of \$25,588 for two separate periods in 2012 and 2013.

He was also not provided with the required meal breaks, despite sometimes working more than 12 hours a day.

The punishment was a record for the Fair Work Ombudsman, overtaking a fine handed out in February to a former owner-operator of a cafe in Albury. Judge Philip Burchardt said Taleb's underpayments were "egregious". "The underpayments were so significant that the total not paid to [the worker] was, in relative terms, enormous for such a short time," he said. "I accept the submission of the [ombudsman] that the way it worked out was that [the worker] was paid wages of between \$3.49 and \$9.29 per hour."

***Afghani refugee 'vulnerable', judge says***

Judge Burchardt said the business was not lawfully run, with all wages made in cash and the company in breach of a number of workplace regulations.

The worker had come to Australia as an asylum seeker and spent time in detention before being released and granted residency in 2010.

"[The worker] was a vulnerable employee in that he was a recent arrival to Australia and totally lacked fluency in English, and could reasonably be understood to be most unlikely to be aware of any entitlements at law," Judge Burchardt said.

The judge said Taleb, from Altona North, had never apologised and his contrition was "unimpressive".

Fair Work Ombudsman Natalie James said 18 per cent of people who approached Fair Work about issues with their employers were either migrants or on a visa, but they only made up 5 per cent of the overall workforce.

"Visa workers and migrant workers are very vulnerable for a range of reasons and in this case, the worker had very little fluency in English and we were able to use translators to work with him," she said.

She said the case served as a warning to employers that they would be prosecuted for flouting the law.

"I think this is an example of ruthless exploitation on the part of this employer, this is an individual who the court described as uncooperative and aggressive under cross-examination, and also described him as an overbearing and unimpressive witness," she said.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-02/sunshine-fruit-market-former-owner-fined-for-underpaying-worker/8767584>

## **29. Zed Seselja defends Australia's resettlement of 12,000 refugees**

Caberra Times

August 1 2017 - 8:09PM

Tom McIlroy

The federal government won't say where 12,000 Syrian and Iraqi refugees have been resettled in Australia, despite local governments warning their municipalities are at risk of being overburdened by new arrivals.

Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs Zed Seselja said on Tuesday Australia was doing "more than our bit" in resettling vulnerable people but exact location figures would not be released on where new arrivals had settled.

The comments follow criticism from the mayor of Fairfield in south-west Sydney, Frank Carbone, who said more infrastructure funding and assistance for resettled refugees who are unable to work was needed.

Senator Seselja said Australia should be very proud of its record in accepting an increasing number of humanitarian visa arrivals, including the 12,000 persecuted minorities from Syria and Iraq, and spending more than \$1 billion on settlement services over five years.

"I think we should be very proud of what we've done in reaching out to one of the conflict zones in the world where there are many people who are doing it very, very tough and we are doing I think more than our bit in taking some of the most desperate people from around the world," he told ABC radio.

"In general terms, when it comes to the 12,000, we don't specifically release the exact numbers that go to each location and there's a number of reasons for that. People can, over time, track generally where the movements are.

"Many of these people are sponsored... by particular communities. Those communities will therefore share a lot of the burden in terms of costs, in getting them here and the like, so in those cases they will most often settle where their sponsors are."

Senator Seselja said those sponsored by the government were mostly being settled in regional locations outside major cities, including Toowoomba, Geelong and Hobart.

"We do all we can to try and provide the services in regional locations but in the end we can tell people that they can't move to Sydney or can't move to Melbourne or other areas," he said.

He said the government would continue to work with Fairfield City Council and other local governments and service providers.

"Where an area does get larger numbers coming in, they also get a larger amount of funding because the funding follows the clients.

"In our settlement services, if there's an area that is getting more than their share, they'll also get more than their share of funding and support services to assist with dealing with those."

The commitment to take 12,000 extra people was made by former prime minister Tony Abbott. The last of the group is settling in Australia this month.

Next year Australia's humanitarian intake of refugees will grow to more than 18,000.

Last week the federal government announced a new humanitarian settlement policy which it said would improve case management and provide individualised, needs-based support as well as improve English language, education and employment outcomes for new Australian arrivals.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/zed-seselja-defends-australias-resettlement-of-12000-refugees-20170801-gxmsp7.html>