



# Nauru Bulletin

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## Transferee interviews commence at Nauru processing centre

Transferee interviews for asylum seekers at the Australian run regional processing centre on Nauru have begun on the weekend (23 Nov).

Fourteen Sri-Lankans have been interviewed over Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The interviews went well and it is expected ten interviews will be conducted per day.

The transferee interviews are generally to gather information from the asylum seekers providing them the opportunity to tell their story and why they are claiming asylum.

The overall processing including the transferee interviews are conducted by Nauru's Department of Justice, with assistance from officials from the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).



**Government Ministers are greeted by one of the interpreters prior to addressing the first group of asylum seekers on Friday 23 Nov**

The announcement of the commencement of processing was made last week (Friday 23 Nov) when Ministers from the Nauru Government visited the RPC.

Nauru's Foreign Minister Hon Dr Kieren Keke who made the announcement was accompanied by Justice Minister Dominic Tabuna, Chairman of the Working Committee on the

RPC Mathew Batsiua MP, Secretary for Justice Lisa Lo Piccolo and two members of her legal staff.

The Ministers also took questions from the asylum seekers following the announcement and initial briefing.

The second stage of the process will commence early next year when the asylum seekers can formally lodge their claims. Independent legal advisors will be on island to assist them through this process.

The applications will be assessed by the Secretary for Justice and officials from the justice department.

The asylum seekers were also advised that there will be an appeals process should anyone be dissatisfied with the outcome of their assessment•

## President Dabwido initiates public consultation on WWII memorial

His Excellency President Spret Dabwido has set up a Truk Memorial Committee that will involve gauging public opinion regarding a monument to remember Nauruans that returned and perished on Truk Island (formerly Chuuk) during the Second World War.

The monument which is proposed to be built by 31st January 2013 – the 45th anniversary of the country's independence, will hold a casket containing the skeletal remains of a Nauruan who died on Truk.

The President realises that the subject is a sensitive one, therefore initiated public consultations on the matter.

Three public meetings were held last week specifically to gauge ideas about the monument.

The proposed site for the monument is at the harbour roundabout in Aiwo district – the site where Nauruan survivors returning from Truk disembarked.

The Truk Memorial Committee consists of Godfrey Thoma MP, Richard Britten, Reverend Roger Mwareow, Aaron Cook, Jenny Solomon, Kim Aroi and Limay Uera•



**Asylum seekers make their way into the Nauru District Court on 19 Nov**

## Nauru looks at RPC issues

rather than wait until completion of the entire facility.

The second concern is questions around the assessment and process times on their asylum claims.

Minister Keke visited the RPC last week (23 Nov) to announce that the first step of the processing would commence the following day (24 Nov).

The Transferee Interviews is the first step in the process—this allows each of the asylum seekers to tell their story.

Most of the services and support at the RPC is being provided by the Government of Australia in terms of what the Nauru government has requested.

The Government of Nauru is also looking at ensuring that the freedom of movement or open centre policy can be delivered properly.

Officials from Amnesty International visited the RPC early last week (19-22 Nov) and offered suggestions on how to quickly implement some aspects of the overall workings of the RPC.

Minister Keke stated that Amnesty International had made comments that the medical services within the facility were of high standard and that the psychological and spiritual needs of the asylum seekers are also being accommodated.

Assistance from external agencies such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is also available to help Nauru ensure the best welfare for the asylum seekers.

Also, two weeks ago a group of asylum seekers that have been refusing food began eating again upon learning that Amnesty International was to visit the Centre.

During the same week (19 Nov) 15 Iranian asylum seekers appeared in the Nauru District Court to face riot charges.

Fourteen of the 15 Iranian men who appeared before Resident Magistrate Peter Law were represented by a Nauruan lawyer.

Damages to the Centre during the riot on 30 September are estimated to be \$24,000. Bail was set for the men who have since returned to the RPC.

Mr Law stated that given the amount of cases before the Courts, it was unlikely their case would be heard again before February 2013.

One of the 15 men was excused from attending on medical grounds.

Dr Grahame Thom from Amnesty International states that while the asylum seekers are complaining about the weather conditions at the Centre, he assured them progress is being made to set up proper permanent accommodation.

Meanwhile, regular off-site excursions are arranged for the asylum seekers for island familiarisation, sports, recreation (including swimming) and religious services.

The Government of Nauru is addressing unexpected delays in commencing construction work for a permanent facility at the Australian run regional processing centre (RPC) on Nauru.

The challenges mainly concern finalising lease agreements with landowners.

“Until then construction cannot begin. The materials and building equipment are literally at the port [in Australia] ready to be shipped over,” Nauru’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon Dr Kieren Keke said.

“There’s existing leases on the land but the legal advice is that some adjustments need to be made and landowners have fresh demands. So we need to find agreements with those new demands.”

Minister Keke hopes an agreement can be reached by the end of this week.

The two primary issues of concern to the asylum seekers at the RPC are the living conditions which can be corrected once construction begins.

Groups will slowly be moved out into permanent accommodation as construction is progressing

# Taiwan orthopaedic team wrap up medical visit



**Team leader Dr Chen ( r) with his orthopaedic team on their last day at the hospital**

An orthopaedic team of the Taiwan Mobile Medical Mission (TMMM) arrived on Nauru last week (19 Nov) making it the second visit by a Taiwan specialist team this year.

During their short visit, the team consulted over 80 patients and performed nine operations.

The team members include orthopaedic specialist Dr Chen Kun Hui, specialist Dr

Chiu Shih Te, anaesthetist Dr Feng Yu Pin, nurse Chen Wen huey, anaesthetic nurse and co-operator Hsu Chih Hsuan.

Coordinator Dr Hwang Sheau Feng arrived two months prior to the orthopaedic team's visit to work with Nauru's Health Ministry prepare cases for the team and formulate a work program that would best address the health requirements. His visit greatly assisted in the early detection and identification of the specific needs of the patients.

With the prior knowledge of existing and possible orthopaedic cases ahead of them, the team brought with them their own operating equipment and supplies including artificial bones.

The team will pay a courtesy visit to His Excellency President Sprent Dabwido before their departure tomorrow afternoon (28Nov)▪

# Local practitioners undertake civil litigation training

Early this month (Nov 12) the Minister for Justice Hon Dominic Tabuna officially opened the legal workshop on civil litigation and welcomed the trainers and participants.

Trainers Guy Gilbert and Robert Lancy have over 30 years experience in the law profession, specialising in civil advocacy. They are both from Melbourne, Australia.

The workshop was funded by NZAID through the Pacific Judicial Development Program (PJDP) and was attended by legal practitioners and individuals working or studying in the legal profession.

While the aims and objectives of the workshop are to improve the skills of legal practitioners in the area of civil litigation it also covers a range of steps involving the initiation of litigation right through to presenting a case in court with a particular emphasis on the Civil Procedure Rules.

Participants were guided on how to present opening statements and cases before the court. The different types of civil action cases, land appeals and judicial review were also addressed.

The workshop will also look at alternatives to court litigation such as mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution.

“We are hoping that we can join together in a cooperative exercise and help the participants improve their skills, take from us whatever advice they'll benefit from our experience of many years in law and try and bring together a high standard of understanding of the principle in civil advocacy,” Mr Lancy said.

Mr Gilbert and Mr Lancy departed on 21 November but will return to continue a series of workshops on advocacy training▪



**Trainers Guy Gilbert (L) and Robert Lancy during tea break at the civil litigation workshop**

# Government signs MoU with external logistics company

The government of Nauru in its intention to improve its customs and border control signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Rae Corporation Incorporated (RCI) a military logistic company from Melbourne Australia.

RCI Nauru will complement the Government's customs and border control unit.

His Excellency President Sprent Dabwido believes the joint venture between Nauru and RCI will improve revenue collection as well as develop the standards of Nauru's Customs and Border control unit.

The new set up will create local employment as well as invest in local infrastructure including the purchase of new assets and equipment for both air and sea ports. A bonded store facility with a refrigerated storage capacity will also be included.

RCI will provide regular updates to Government with fully audited reports and will ensure that there are no unnecessary costs passed onto the local Nauruan population or businesses.

RCI will operate on a five year contract and have already started to observe the workings of the ships and airport



Containers stored at the Aiwo port



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