



St Vincent de Paul Society
NATIONAL COUNCIL *good works*

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Media Release

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Manus Island: St Vincent de Paul Society says asylum seekers must be brought to Australia now

The St Vincent de Paul Society says it is now a matter of utmost urgency for the more than 800 asylum seekers and refugees at the Manus Island detention centre to be brought to Australia, as no other option is available to them.

Media reports indicate the men have been told by PNG immigration officials they must leave the centre to make way for the demolition of some of its accommodation blocks.

“It is not an option for people found to be refugees to instead relocate to a so-called transit centre in the PNG community,” the Society’s National Council CEO Dr John Falzon said.

“It is well known that refugees who have already tried settling into the PNG community have found it too hard or too dangerous.”

Those with major health issues require ongoing medical support, and funding of this by the Australian government is about to end.

The Society is also critical of reports that those whose claims for asylum have been rejected should return to their countries of origin before the end of August, when a \$20,000 cash incentive from the Australian Government will cease.

“It is not an option for asylum seekers and refugees to return to their place of origin when doing so could result in persecution or harm,” Dr Falzon said.

In line with criticism by UNHCR, the Society is particularly critical of forced deportations occurring without an appropriate review.

“Given a deal that would see the men relocated to the US is moving too slowly, the only viable thing to do is to bring them to Australia.”

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