



Darwin Asylum Seeker Support and Advocacy Network

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GENUINE REFUGEES ROT IN DETENTION AS RESULT OF DRACONIAN LAWS

Four genuine refugees, one Rohingya and three Tamils, are currently left rotting in the Northern Immigration Detention Centre, as a result of negative security assessments from the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (“ASIO”). The men cannot be deported to their home country and are unlikely to find a third country in which they can reside.

Darwin Asylum Seeker Support and Advocacy Network (“DASSAN”) spokesperson, Fernanda Dahlstrom said “the men have not been told why they have been issued with a negative ASIO assessment and what evidence, if any, ASIO is relying on in issuing the negative assessment. The men have been visited by members of DASSAN and are shocked that they considered a threat to national security”.

“It is contrary to democratic principles and the rule of law that a person is able to be indefinitely detained without knowing why and given no right to appeal. However, this is the circumstance that refugees issued with a negative ASIO assessment find themselves in”. The powers that ASIO have should concern every Australian who believes in the rule of law.”

They men join close to sixty other refugees around Australia who have failed ASIO security assessments in recent years, including one former Darwin refugee who was recently issued with a negative assessment just before he turned 18. All men have been provided with a letter from ASIO telling them that there is no ability to appeal the decision.

Ms Dahlstrom added that “all of the men are shocked that ASIO consider them a security threat. They are suffering psychologically as a result of spending long periods in detention with no certainty about their future and a number have self harmed. No one should have to spend the rest of their life in detention without knowing why, especially in the humanitarian disaster that is the Northern Immigration Detention Centre.”

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