



Darwin Asylum Seeker Support and Advocacy Network

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Asylum Seekers to Begin Moving into Wickham Point Detention Centre

The Darwin Asylum Seeker Support and Advocacy Network (“DASSAN”) today criticised this week’s movement of asylum seekers into the new Wickham Point Detention Centre. The first asylum seekers are expected to arrive from Christmas Island on Tuesday. By the end of the week, over 100 asylum seekers will be detained in the new detention centre located in a mosquito prone area deemed unsuitable for a workers’ accommodation facility.

The Wickham Point Detention Centre will eventually hold 1,500 people bringing Darwin’s total asylum seeker population to close to 2,500 people. DASSAN spokesperson Fernanda Dahlstrom said “The Department of Immigration and Citizenship may call this centre an “accommodation facility” but whatever it is called it is nothing more than an addition to Darwin’s collection of factories for mental illness. The past year has seen a humanitarian catastrophe inside Darwin detention centres, The number of self harm and suicide attempts in Darwin in 2011 can be counted in the hundreds”.

The centre is expected to cost over \$200 million dollars to lease and maintain over a three year period. Ms Dahlstrom added that “the Government knows that \$ 200 million would be better spent on community detention and bridging visas than on these massive detention centres. The vast majority of asylum seekers in detention will be found to be genuine refugees and become Australian residents”.

For media comment, Fernanda Dahlstrom, DASSAN: 0415 184 856.