



## **MANUS ISLAND MUST BE IMMEDIATELY EVACUATED**

### **The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre calls for the immediate evacuation of Manus Island detention centre and the safety of asylum seekers to be secured**

Last night there was escalating violence at the Manus Island Detention Centre. One asylum seeker has passed away from head injuries; another person has been shot and is in a critical condition while 13 more people are in a serious condition. Up to 77 asylum seekers have been injured.

“It is devastating news to hear that the life of an asylum seeker has been lost. We are calling on the Australian Government to secure the safety of all asylum seekers and urgently evacuate the camp.

People can be boarded onto the dormitory ship or airlifted out. This is a matter of personal safety and must be immediately addressed,” states Pamela Curr, Refugee Rights Advocate at the ASRC.

The ASRC received calls from distressed asylum seekers during the outbreak of violence last night. The recordings state that the centre was attacked by locals and asylum seekers fled for their safety.

“These voices cannot be ignored; we are putting the lives of asylum seekers at risk and people are currently in a very unsafe situation. The lives and safety of asylum seekers must be the utmost priority right now,” states Pamela.

The ASRC is seriously concerned for the safety of asylum seekers on Manus Island. We urge the government to respond quickly to this situation and inform the public of the action that will be taken to respond.

We also call for a full, independent inquiry into these events. It is vital to understand what happened, how it happened and what processes failed to protect asylum seekers.

The recordings from two phone calls to the ASRC last night can be found here:

<http://www.asrc.org.au/2014/02/18/draft-transcript-of-phone-messages-received-from-asylum-seekers-at-manus-island-detention-centre/>

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