



Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Attachment A

DECISION RECORD

Request Details

FOI Request FA 14//05/00709

File Number ADF2014/16598

Scope of request

"I request information regarding the return, voluntary or involuntary, of asylum seekers from Australia, PNG and Nauru to Syria. I would like to restrict this information to 2014 only, and would like to include communications between Australia and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)."

Documents in scope

1. Emails regarding options for returning of clients to Syria (approx. 51pg)

Authority to make decision

I am an officer authorised under section 23 of the FOI Act to make decisions in respect of requests to access documents or to amend or annotate departmental records.

Information considered

In reaching my decision, I have considered the following:

- The *Freedom of Information Act 1982*;
- Departmental files and/or documents (identified above); and
- The Australian Information Commissioner's guidelines relating to access to documents held by government.

Reasons for decision

I have considered the files within the scope of your request and applied exemptions in part or in full to documents as detailed in the Schedule of Documents. You should read the schedule in conjunction with the exemptions below.

Deletion of exempt or irrelevant material under s.22 of the FOI Act

Section 22(2) of the FOI Act provides that, where an agency reaches the view that a document contains exempt information or material that is irrelevant to the request **and** it is possible for the agency to prepare an edited copy of the document with the irrelevant or exempt material deleted, then the agency must prepare such a copy.

This edited copy must be provided to the applicant. Further, the decision maker must advise the applicant in writing that the edited copy of the document has been prepared and of the reason(s) for each of the deletions in the document (s.22(3) of the FOI Act).

Exempt material is deleted pursuant to s.22(1)(a)(i) and irrelevant material is deleted pursuant to s.22(1)(a)(ii) of the FOI Act.

Conditional exemption – personal information - s.47F(1))

A document is 'conditionally exempt' under s.47F(1) of the Act if its release would 'involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information about any person (including a deceased person)'. A

people our business

conditionally exempt document **must** be released under the FOI Act unless the release would be 'contrary to the public interest'. The Act requires me to undertake a 2 step process in deciding if an exemption applies.

Would the disclosure be an 'unreasonable' disclosure of personal information?

The exemption in s.47F(1) of the Act will only apply if I am satisfied that the disclosure would involve 'unreasonable' disclosure of a third party's personal information. The Act states that, when deciding whether the disclosure of the personal information would be 'unreasonable', I 'must' have regard to the factors set out in s.47F(2) of the Act:

- (a) the extent to which the information is well known;
- (b) whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be (or to have been) associated with the matters dealt with in the document;
- (c) the availability of the information from publicly available resources;
- (d) any other matters that I consider relevant.

I have considered each of these elements separately below.

(a) Extent to which the information is known

Information relating to requests for travel documents from the Syrian consulate is not well known. Requests for travel documents relate to specific individuals which is not well known. On balance, I believe that the factor weighs in favour of the disclosure being unreasonable.

(b) Whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be associated with the matters in the document

The information relates to specific matters within the document. The identities of individuals associated with these matters is not well-known. On balance, I believe that the factor weighs in favour of the disclosure being unreasonable.

(c) The availability of the information from publicly available sources

The information relating to specific individuals is not available from publicly available sources. On balance I believe the factor weighs in favour of the disclosure being unreasonable.

(d) Any other matters that the agency considers relevant

Release of specific travel document requests of individuals would be contrary to the public interest and could reasonably be expected to prejudice the protection of an individual's right to privacy. On balance, I believe that the factor weighs in favour of the disclosure being unreasonable.

After considering each element in s.47F(2), I am satisfied that disclosure of the personal information would be an 'unreasonable' disclosure of personal information.

Therefore, I am satisfied that the information I have identified in the relevant documents is 'conditionally exempt' under s.47F(1) of the Act.

Is the release contrary to the public interest?

As a result, I must now consider the factors set out in the public interest test in s.11B(3) of the Act.

Factors favouring disclosure

I have considered the factors set out in s.11B(3) of the Act which were discussed above.

While full release would promote the objects of the Act, I consider that partial release of the information would inform debate on a matter of public importance. In addition, the partial release of the information is relevant to the effective oversight of public expenditure and would not facilitate you accessing your own personal information.

Factors weighing against disclosure

As discussed previously, the FOI Guidelines that contain a non-exhaustive list of factors weighing against disclosure, which must be considered under s.11B(5) of the Act.

I consider that these factors are relevant to the documents in question:

- *harm the interests of an individual or group of individuals*
- *prejudice the protection of an individual's right to privacy*

On balance, I am satisfied that the disclosure of the information I have identified as 'personal information' would amount to an 'unreasonable disclosure of personal information'. Further, I am satisfied that the release of the personal information in the documents would be 'contrary to the public interest'. Therefore, I am satisfied that the personal information in the documents is exempt from release under section 47F(1) of the Act.

The attached Schedule of Documents identifies documents where material has either been deleted as exempt information under the FOI Act or deleted as irrelevant to the scope of the request.



Mel Heggart
Authorised decision maker
FOI & Privacy Policy Section
Parliamentary and Executive Coordination Branch
Immigration and Border Protection Portfolio
Phone (02) 6264 3131
Email foi@immi.gov.au

1 August 2014



Australian Government

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Attachment B

SCHEDULE OF DOCUMENTS TO DECISION RECORD

FOI Request FA 14//05/00709

File Number ADF2014/16598

1. Other documents;

Number of pages	Description	Decision	Legislation
51	Emails regarding options for returning of clients to Syria	Release with exemption	S47F(1) S22(1)(a)(ii)

Attachment C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982 - SECT 47F

Public interest conditional exemptions--personal privacy

General rule

(1) A [document](#) is [conditionally exempt](#) if its disclosure under this Act would involve the unreasonable disclosure of [personal information](#) about any person (including a deceased person).

(2) In determining whether the disclosure of the [document](#) would involve the unreasonable disclosure of [personal information](#), an [agency](#) or [Minister](#) must have regard to the following matters:

- (a) the extent to which the information is well known;
- (b) whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be (or to have been) associated with the matters dealt with in the [document](#);
- (c) the availability of the information from publicly accessible sources;
- (d) any other matters that the [agency](#) or [Minister](#) considers relevant.

(3) Subject to subsection (5), subsection (1) does not have effect in relation to a [request](#) by a person for access to a [document](#) by reason only of the inclusion in the [document](#) of matter relating to that person.

Access given to [qualified person](#) instead

(4) Subsection (5) applies if:

(a) a [request](#) is made to an [agency](#) or [Minister](#) for access to a [document](#) of the [agency](#), or an official [document](#) of the [Minister](#), that contains information concerning the [applicant](#), being information that was provided by a [qualified person](#) acting in his or her capacity as a [qualified person](#); and

(b) it appears to the [principal officer](#) of the [agency](#) or to the [Minister](#) (as the case may be) that the disclosure of the information to the [applicant](#) might be detrimental to the [applicant](#)'s physical or mental health, or well-being.

(5) The [principal officer](#) or [Minister](#) may, if access to the [document](#) would otherwise be given to the [applicant](#), direct that access to the [document](#), so far as it contains that information, is not to be given to the [applicant](#) but is to be given instead to a [qualified person](#) who:

- (a) carries on the same occupation, of a kind mentioned in the definition of [qualified person](#) in subsection (7), as the first-mentioned [qualified person](#); and
- (b) is to be nominated by the [applicant](#).

(6) The powers and functions of the [principal officer](#) of an [agency](#) under this section may be exercised by an [officer](#) of the [agency](#) acting within his or her scope of authority in accordance with arrangements referred to in [section 23](#).

(7) In this section:

"qualified person" means a person who carries on, and is entitled to carry on, an occupation that involves the provision of care for the physical or mental health of people or for their well-being, and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes any of the following:

- (a) a medical practitioner;
- (b) a psychiatrist;
- (c) a psychologist;
- (d) a counsellor;
- (e) a social worker.

Note: Access must generally be given to a [conditionally exempt document](#) unless it would be contrary to the public interest (see [section 11A](#)).

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]
Date: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:51:52 PM

Sensitive

Telecon?

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:51 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Yeah, I think a discussion is in order.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:08 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Do you want to make a time to talk about this tomorrow?

Initially, the dept returns service is the front-running idea.

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:06 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

Sensitive

We need to start thinking about this quickly. I've got a 1:1 meeting with [REDACTED] on Wednesday in which I had intended to raise the concept of a dept returns service but might mean that I need to raise it with him asap.

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:01 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Thanks [REDACTED] – good pick up [REDACTED] and post-arrival assistance/support.

[REDACTED] – grateful for your views on this. Your advice will not only help in this particular case, but also in development of the broader offshore policy.

Re the other Qs, you will see from a related email that I've asked [REDACTED] from this team to chase up TPs.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 3:02 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

I've been in and out of the office quite a bit today and am catching up on emails currently. Some of the questions raised by [REDACTED] will clearly best be answered by people in RHIP/On Pro/Settlement: presumably someone had referred these on ?

Additionally, I note that [REDACTED] (Returns Policy) wasn't copied in and Qs around financial assistance in [REDACTED] main text might fall to Returns Policy given that IOM are unlikely to be involved.

For information

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Returns & Removals Strategy & Support
Compliance and Case Resolution Division
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 2:50 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

The only option in terms of routing will have them flying into Syria from Jordan.

Post return support – Suggest we ask IOM for some advice on this if they were inclined, otherwise we would need more info on their personal circumstances and they may well end up with very different needs so I wouldn't want to say they would all be getting the same thing.

I'll leave the rest for others to comment on.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Status Resolution Services
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PO BOX 9984, Sydney, NSW 2001 Australia

[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1)

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 12:16 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear All

Last week [REDACTED] and I met with the three Syrian transferees that are currently on PSP. We had G4S, TSA, IHMS, STTARS and an interpreter also at the meeting. I was running the meeting with all others as support. I was very open and frank with the transferees, I described the options that they have and I was clear that they would not be settled in Australia or a third country. I did say that if they chose to return home the department would work to get them home safely, with no guarantee of any time frames. The transferees were visibly upset and quite anxious, they were quite adamant that I would be sending them home to their death. We met with another of the Syrian transferees to provide him with the same information. He raised a question that the other transferees also raised and that was of travel path, they all wanted to know what route they would take because most path ways are not safe. I made it very clear that the department would try an answer any questions they had regarding their assisted return to Syria.

Can anyone give me an idea of what route they would possibly take and what sort of financial assistance the department would provide, I think these transferees are seriously thinking about returning home again, at this moment it is a day by day situation.

I have also just received further questions from these transferees, I did address these questions at our initial meeting, however if anyone would like to make any recommendations on how to answer these question I would be more than happy to take your suggestions on board,

I have listed the questions verbatim:

1. Why can't we be sent to another country?
2. Why can't we be referred to UNHCR to handle our case?
3. Does Australia have the right to send us to another country example Canada, New Zealand or Britain and if not why not?
4. Can the (Australian) government make contact with these countries?
5. Is it legal to hold us here against our will on Manus Island?

Kind regards

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Detention Operations Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 3:39 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

And not to mention that, whenever and wherever we can, we need to be promoting a light touch/hands off approach to returns, given that this needs to ultimately become a host government owned and managed process.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:30 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

Sensitive

[REDACTED]

At risk of being blunt, its Manus and wait until whenever the RSD process has been finalised or return to Syria.

Given this though, I would now think long and hard about routing and putting these folks on a plane by themselves given they could jump off in transit but having said that, I don't know that we have the powers to send escorts with them should we continue down a return pathway.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

NSW & ACT Detention Case Resolution
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PO BOX 9984, Sydney, NSW 2001 Australia

[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:27 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Thanks [REDACTED]

This is a real shame, but not completely unforeseen. Thanks for all your efforts to date.

[REDACTED] can I suggest that one of your team gives [REDACTED] some advice re next steps eg. are we in 'ultimatum' territory (we want to know if you are signing up for VR or not?) or can we hint that departing from PNG doesn't necessarily mean returning to Syria? I am fully conscious of needing to manage PSP status, morale etc, but nevertheless seeking some guidance.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:06 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear [REDACTED]

It seems the Syrian transferees have a different view now. Unfortunately according to STTARS and IHMS they will only look at returning home if it is the absolute last option. They all would like to be reunited with their families in Australia, or another country. They are worried about going home as you can see below from the TSA notes. I will be engaging with the three transferees on PSP in the next few days.

regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Detention Operations Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1), s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]
Date: Tuesday, 28 January 2014 11:57:15 AM

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for this information, unfortunately the flight path is the deciding factor for this cohort. I will meet with them again and advise that it will be on commercial flights, not sure if this will suffice. I don't think there is a formal process for their request, however I have said that they can ask to speak with DIBP if they do decide to go home. A formal process can't hurt.

cheers

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Detention Operations Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 28 January 2014 10:46 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello [REDACTED]

I've had a conversation with [REDACTED] and consistent with his advice I think there's not much more we can do until the transferees make a decision about requesting to go back to Syria; otherwise they will continue through the refugee determination process.

My only other comment regarding flight paths is that you could let them know that they would be travelling on commercial flights.

Also, can you advise if we have a formal process for transferees in this cohort to sign up for voluntary return? If not, I'll start work on some form of documentation.

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[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 26 January 2014 1:28 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: Re: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Classification: [DLM=Sensitive]

[REDACTED]
Tehran is in Iran, not Syria.

I may have previously advised last leg into Syria will be via Jordan.

I would not want any further information about routing articulated to them at this stage.

Flights into Damascus, Syria are very limited and only the route vis Jordan provides something that we can consider to ensure connections/transits are realistic, kept to a minimum and in locations where we can seek support if required.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, January 26, 2014 12:55 PM AUS Eastern Standard Time
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear All

Thankyou for the talking points. I met with three of the Syrian transferees yesterday, two of which are on PSP. I read the answers out to their questions. They were all accepting of the information, as you can imagine they are all very concerned for their families back in Syria. The

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

main question that came out of our discussion was" what is the travel route we will take?" How are we going to get home to our families safely?" .

I have had a look at some information on the internet and the path Air Niugini follow POM, Hong Kong, Dubai, Tehran or POM, Singapore, Istanbul, Tehran. IOM don't really have any information on this travel, can anyone provide me with some information for this group, I am thinking this will help them make a choice to return home or not, they are worried about their safety.

I did mention to these transferees that I am happy to chat with them to answer any further questions, I also made a commitment to provide some answers regarding their proposed travel route. Your advice will be greatly appreciated.

I have also received some feedback from IHMS and TSA this morning regarding this group of Transferees, according to the staff members these gents are looking a little more positive.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Offshore Detention Operations Branch

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, 22 January 2014 11:56 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Thanks [REDACTED]

Apologies for the delay. For lots of reasons (managing expectations, consistency, etc), we want to make sure we get the messaging correct.

I understood [REDACTED] from this team is discussing a suitable response [REDACTED] as we speak (or will be doing so very soon).

Regards

[REDACTED]

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 22 January 2014 12:38 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear [REDACTED]

Can someone please provide the official departmental stance on the questions below, I am meeting with the Syrian group again this week I would like to provide them with a response. I know the answers to most of the questions, however I would like the official wording please.

I have also asked IOM for any information regarding flight paths etc, I am yet to receive anything.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Detention Operations Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 11:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

Subject: RE: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear All

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I have listed the questions verbatim:

1. Why can't we be sent to another country?
2. Why can't we be referred to UNHCR to handle our case?
3. Does Australia have the right to send us to another country example Canada, New Zealand or Britain and if not why not?
4. Can the (Australian) government make contact with these countries?
5. Is it legal to hold us here against our will on Manus Island?

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Offshore Detention Operations Branch

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 3:39 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

And not to mention that, whenever and wherever we can, we need to be promoting a light touch/hands off approach to returns, given that this needs to ultimately become a host government owned and managed process.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:30 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

[REDACTED]

At risk of being blunt, its Manus and wait until whenever the RSD process has been finalised or return to Syria.

Given this though, I would now think long and hard about routing and putting these folks on a plane by themselves given they could jump off in transit but having said that, I don't know that we have the powers to send escorts with them should we continue down a return pathway.

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
NSW & ACT Detention Case Resolution
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PO BOX 9984, Sydney, NSW 2001 Australia

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:27 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Thanks [REDACTED]

This is a real shame, but not completely unforeseen. Thanks for all your efforts to date.

[REDACTED] can I suggest that one of your team gives [REDACTED] some advice re next steps eg. are we in 'ultimatum' territory (we want to know if you are signing up for VR or not?) or can we hint that departing from PNG doesn't necessarily mean returning to Syria? I am fully conscious of needing to manage PSP status, morale etc, but nevertheless seeking some guidance.

Regards
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

Released by DIBP under the
Freedom of Information Act 1982

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 January 2014 4:06 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Syrians s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear [REDACTED]

It seems the Syrian transferees have a different view now. Unfortunately according to STTARS and IHMS they will only look at returning home if it is the absolute last option. They all would like to be reunited with their families in Australia, or another country. They are worried about going home as you can see below from the TSA notes. I will be engaging with the three transferees on PSP in the next few days.

regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Detention Operations Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1), s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

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From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW **s.** [REDACTED] - Syrian [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 1 April 2014 1:33:48 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

For-Official-Use-Only

FYI

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
NSW & ACT Detention Case Resolution
Status Resolution Services
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
PO BOX 9984, Sydney, NSW 2001 Australia

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Website: www.immi.gov.au

For-Official-Use-Only

From: [REDACTED] **s. 47F(1)**
Sent: Tuesday, 1 April 2014 11:30 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: **s.** [REDACTED] - Syrian [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Thanks Katrina

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 1 April 2014 10:00 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: **s.** [REDACTED] - Syrian [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For-Official-Use-Only

Hi [REDACTED]

We will make arrangements to talk to him.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Freedom of Information Act 1982

Department of Immigration and Border Protection

s. 47F(1)

For-Official-Use-Only

From: [REDACTED] s. 47F(1)
Sent: Tuesday, 1 April 2014 9:53 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: s. 47F(1) - Syrian

Hi [REDACTED]

The above client has requested AVR. As IOM cannot assist with return to Syria at the moment would you please check if he can be assisted through DIBP removal.

Best regards

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]
Assisted Voluntary Return Program
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Manus Island RPC, PNG

s. 47F(1)
s. 47F(1)

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] s. 47F(1)
Sent: Thursday, 12 December 2013 6:09 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Syrian voluntary returnees... [DLM=Sensitive]

Hi [REDACTED]
Further to my advice that IOM does not return individuals to situations of vulnerability, the head of IOM's Preparedness and Response Division, Department of Operations and Emergencies has elaborated on the Syrian situation as follows: "The Syria crisis has so far produced 2.3 million refugees and counting, on top of over 6 million IDPs. Both figures are expected to reach much higher levels over the course of the next year if the humanitarian situation remains what it is. It is impossible to determine when and in what conditions IOM may be in a position to support voluntary returns to Syria."

Best regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2013 02:23 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Syrian voluntary returnees... [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]
Thanks for your advice on IOM's current position on not being able to assist Syrian returns to Syria or surrounding countries because of high vulnerability.

Grateful if you could provide me with a short statement to that effect so I can refer to it when queried in the future... cheers

[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Policy Section
Compliance and Case Resolution Division
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED] s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

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From: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]
Date: Wednesday, 15 January 2014 5:19:53 PM

Sensitive

As discussed:

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 7 January 2014 5:09 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Travel Document Requests and Consular Enquiries; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your email and for the work you have done with s. 47F(1) [REDACTED].

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] request regarding handling of his UNHCR-issued identity documents noted, we will just use the Syrian government-issued ID documents.

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] request regarding handling of his UN issued identity documents noted.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 7 January 2014 5:05 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

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Sensitive

Thanks [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – can I kindly ask you to facilitate next steps re TD?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)
[REDACTED]

E: offshore.settlement.taskforce@immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 7 January 2014 4:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello All,

I hope this email finds you well.

Please be advised that this afternoon my colleague [REDACTED] and I met with s. 47F(1) to talk through some of the issues and complete the attached documents.

I explained to s. 47F(1) the reasons for our meeting. s. 47F(1) did not initially understand when asked to repeat to me what he had understood.

I again explained that his request to return to Syria and personal situation is complicated by the current civil unrest in Syria, which also has implications on the issue of documentation, as well as his personal circumstances as a person of Palestinian origin and the need to establish his right of return. I also again explained the reasons why the IOM was unable to engage with him, and the reasons why DIBP were assisting him. I also explained some of the uncertainty in relation to

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him being issued with any emergency travel documentation as well as the protracted time frames should any documents be issued for his travel. s. 47F(1) was able to demonstrate an understanding of this information.

s. 47F(1) then completed the attached documentation, which includes a letter.

He has requested that his UNHCR letters not be included with the documentation that is provided to the consulate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

I also note that I will depart Nauru on 15 January 2014 and any correspondence after that time should be directed to Tim Kemp, also copied into this email.

Many thanks and kind regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 January 2014 11:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your thoughts. I appreciate we need to manage s. 47F(1) expectations and considering he is a Palestinian national, the prospect of obtaining a Syrian return outcome is not great.

However, I get the impression he is fairly adamant about returning to his family in Syria and if we are going to try to facilitate this, I'm keen to prepare the strongest application we can for submission to the Syrian authorities. We will get better traction with the Syrian C-G if we approach them with a complete travel document application with a formal, supportive covering letter from the department. Simply presenting the ID evidence and asking if s. 47F(1) would be eligible for a travel document will be less likely to result in the C-G extending their assistance.

In terms of strengthening the application further, a letter from s. 47F(1) to the C-G explaining his circumstances, his extensive ties to Syria and his wish to return there would add weight to

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the application.

When you put the application form before **s. 47F(1)**, please let him know we will do what we can to facilitate his return to Syria as per his wishes, but given his Palestinian nationality, there is no guarantee the Syrian authorities will be able to assist.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 January 2014 8:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello [REDACTED],

Many thanks to the [REDACTED] for your emails.

I am happy to meet with the transferee early next week to request that he complete the attached form.

As flagged previously the transferee is frustrated and unable to understand why we cannot simply return him to Syria based on his request.

I am wondering if in the first instance it would be best to use the TRACE team to approach the Syrian Consulate to ascertain if they are able to assist **s. 47F(1)** to best mitigate any false hope? As well as their ability to forward date any ETD?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 4:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

[REDACTED] – please note info below from [REDACTED]

Given the timeframes and uncertainties involved, and your knowledge of the person, I think you are best placed to judge whether you wish to get the TD process started. I imagine any AVR-related communications with s. 47F(1) will need to include counselling around the timeframes and uncertainties as set out below.

Happy to discuss

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]

E: offshore.settlement.taskforce@immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 1:46 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

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Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

It seems clear that s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] is a Palestinian national, not a Syrian. However, given his long-term and (apparently) lawful residence in Syria, there may be scope for him to be granted some form of travel document or alternatively a written right of re-entry into Syria which could be used in conjunction with an Australian Certificate of Identity (COI). Of course, the Syrian authorities may simply state that as a non-Syrian citizen, he is ineligible for a travel document or a written right-of-re-entry. An approach will need to be made to Syrian authorities to establish what assistance they may be able to provide in this case.

The Embassy of Syria in Canberra closed in 2012 following a downgrading of our diplomatic ties. However, the Syrian Consulate-General in Sydney remains open. We will need to request the assistance of the Travel Document Requests and Consular Enquiries (TRACE) team in relation to an approach to the Consulate-General.

In advance of an approach being made to the C-G, I suggest the client should complete the attached travel document application form.

Standard requirements and timeframes for Syrian travel document applications (previous advice from TRACE):

- DIBP cover letter explaining the need for a travel document
- 2 x completed and signed application forms (dual copy attached)
- Evidence of Syrian citizenship
- 4 x passport photographs
- Application fee (amount TBC)

There is no definitive timeframe for obtaining a Syrian document. Over the past two years I have only been required to obtain one Syrian Travel Document. It was a lengthy and tricky process. It can take up to 6 months to obtain the approval to issue the document from the Syrian Foreign Ministry. Once approval is obtained the document is issued at the Syrian Embassy in Jakarta and is then sent to the Sydney Consulate. **The document only has a validity of 10 days from issuance.** On one occasion the document reached us after the expiry date and we needed to cancel the removal and obtain a new document from Jakarta. Although they would not extend the validity date they did agree to record the issuance date in the future, therefore, allowing a little more flexibility, however, the document only reached DIBP two hours prior to the removal.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 10:24 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Offshore Settlement Taskforce
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 10:22 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

As per [REDACTED] email below, the below transferees claims he was born and has resided in Syria since that time. Attached are a number of original documents that state that he is a Palestinian national.

Could you please advise if he would be eligible for a Syrian travel document?

Grateful for any advice you can provide me

Regards

[REDACTED]
Offshore Strategic and Coordination Section
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch

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Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 8:08 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello All,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to you in relation to a complex case that has been raised here in Nauru.

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] claims he was born in Syria and has resided there since that time. He has a number of original documents with him here in property, which I have attached to this email. s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] travelled from Syria on a Palestinian Authority Card and does not currently hold a Syrian passport. His Syrian-issued identity card stated he is a Palestinian national. It is unclear if s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] would qualify for a Syrian travel document.

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] is seeking urgent return to Syria and has previously had contact with IOM Nauru.

I would be grateful for any assistance or direction you can provide in this case. Please advise if I should be including others in this email.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 24 February 2014 11:58 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
s. 47F(1) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

FYI, please see the latest on s. 47F(1) .

[REDACTED] thanks very much for the update. Grateful if you would include [REDACTED] (Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch) in any future updates on s. 47F(1) progression towards return.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, 24 February 2014 11:34 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
[DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi all - FYI

I briefly met with s. 47F(1) this morning at his request, after he approached IOM requesting to speak to DIBP about his return.

I advised his application for a TD was submitted and we may seek his permission to provide original identification documentation to support his application. He was very happy to release any of his identity documentation if this was required.

I advised of an estimated time period for the issue of the TD as below.

He again expressed his desire to return as soon as possible, but was satisfied DIBP were undertaking steps to facilitate his return.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Nauru Offshore Processing Centre

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, 19 February 2014 12:30 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
[DLM=Sensitive]

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Sensitive

Morning all,

Many thanks for your prompt responses.

s. 47F(1) TD application has been sent via Express Post to the Syrian Consulate on 19/02/2014. Additionally a fax copy was been yesterday morning (18/02/2014) to the Consul advising of the intended application. I have attached a scanned copy of the Syrian application sent to the Consul above.

[REDACTED] let's hold off sending the ID cards to NSW, I'll be in touch once there is further movement. When I spoke to the Consul last, he expressed a timeframe of 3-4 months however from [REDACTED] past experience this has been 6 months.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Coordination and Quality Assurance
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 18 February 2014 1:53 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
[DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Yes I can confirm that these id docs are here in Nauru. I have attached a scan copy of them for reference.

I will arrange to meet with s. 47F(1) to seek his consent to remove the documents from his property and send them.

Are you able to confirm when he can expect to get the id documents back (Is the est. 3-6 months for return of the id docs and TD together), also please confirm if you need **all** of the attached id documents? (I know he is going to ask)

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 18 February 2014 12:44 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
[DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your email and for moving this case forward.

s. 47F(1) had already completed an application form and written a letter to the Syrian Consulate-General when I referred this request to your team. I did not attach these documents to the request along with the other documents, my apologies for this oversight.

The documents are now attached. Hope these will be considered favourably by the C-G.

[REDACTED] grateful if you would respond to [REDACTED] second point. i.e.:
- **Are s. 47F(1) original, Syrian issued ID docs held in Nauru by him / DIBP / Transfield?** If so please send all ID original documents to NSW ([REDACTED], Case Resolution DIBP, Demountable 1, 15 Birmingham Ave, Villawood NSW 2163).

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 February 2014 12:16 PM
To: [REDACTED]

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Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
(CRI001) [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Dear [REDACTED]

Last Friday I spoke to the Syrian Consulate and provided the details as per below, noting s. 47F(1) held a Syrian issued ID card stating that he was a Palestine national. The Consul appeared to sound forthcoming in issuing a TD (*as opposed to Written Right of Travel*) for the purpose of removal to Syria once he was able to review the original application. The Consul has indicated a timeframe of 3-4 months for this to be finalised however please note from a past case this has taken approx. 6 months.

To commence this, grateful if you can send through the following asap:

- **Completed Syrian TD application**, I have attached a blank copy (please advise if this has been completed earlier with the detainee as I could not locate this as part of the attachments in the email);
- **Confirm if Manus Island OPC hold the original Syrian issued ID docs**, if so please send all ID original documents to NSW ([REDACTED]), Case Resolution DIBP, Demountable 1, 15 Birmingham Ave, Villawood NSW 2163).

Please don't hesitate to be in contact if you need any further information.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Coordination and Quality Assurance
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 20 January 2014 4:39 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Syrian travel document application for transferee - s. 47F(1)
[DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

As discussed earlier this month, I would be grateful if TRACE would take carriage of a Syrian travel document application for s. 47F(1) who is currently located on

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Manus Island and who wishes to return to Syria. IOM are unable to provide assistance in s. 47 F(1) case as they do facilitate returns to Syria, so it falls to the department to facilitate his return.

I have attached a travel document application cover letter for your review and signature and other application requirements. Not sure what would be the best way to approach the consulate (i.e. by email, mail or in person). You might need to call the honorary Consul and find out his preference.

Please note the cover letter requests either a Syrian travel document or a written right of re-entry. I've included the latter option in case the Syrians are unwilling to issue a Syrian travel document because he is technically Palestinian (I assume he is Palestinian by descent; he was born in Syria and seems to have lived there all his life), but are open to issuing a written 'right of re-entry' which could be used in combination with an Australian COI to facilitate travel to and re-entry into Syria.

Thanks and please let me know if you need any further info or would like to discuss further.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 7 January 2014 4:54 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello All,

I hope this email finds you well.

Please be advised that this afternoon my colleague [REDACTED] and I met with s. 47 F(1) to talk through some of the issues and complete the attached documents.

I explained to s. 47 F(1) the reasons for our meeting. s. 47 F(1) did not initially understand when asked to repeat to me what he had understood.

I again explained that his request to return to Syria and personal situation is complicated by the current civil unrest in Syria, which also has implications on the issue of documentation, as well as his personal circumstances as a person of Palestinian origin and the need to establish his right of return. I also again explained the reasons why the IOM was unable to engage with him, and the reasons why DIBP were assisting him. I also explained some of the uncertainty in relation to him being issued with any emergency travel documentation as well as the protracted time frames should any documents be issued for his travel. s. 47F(1) was able to demonstrate an understanding of this information.

s. 47F(1) then completed the attached documentation, which includes a letter.

He has requested that his UNHCR letters not be included with the documentation that is provided to the consulate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

I also note that I will depart Nauru on 15 January 2014 and any correspondence after that time should be directed to [REDACTED], also copied into this email.

Many thanks and kind regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 January 2014 11:16 AM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for your thoughts. I appreciate we need to manage s. 47F(1) expectations and considering he is a Palestinian national, the prospect of obtaining a Syrian return outcome is not great.

However, I get the impression he is fairly adamant about returning to his family in Syria and if we are going to try to facilitate this, I'm keen to prepare the strongest application we can for submission to the Syrian authorities. We will get better traction with the Syrian C-G if we

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approach them with a complete travel document application with a formal, supportive covering letter from the department. Simply presenting the ID evidence and asking if s. 47F(1) would be eligible for a travel document will be less likely to result in the C-G extending their assistance.

In terms of strengthening the application further, a letter from s. 47F(1) to the C-G explaining his circumstances, his extensive ties to Syria and his wish to return there would add weight to the application.

When you put the application form before s. 47F(1), please let him know we will do what we can to facilitate his return to Syria as per his wishes, but given his Palestinian nationality, there is no guarantee the Syrian authorities will be able to assist.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 January 2014 8:10 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello [REDACTED]

Many thanks to the [REDACTED] for your emails.

I am happy to meet with the transferee early next week to request that he complete the attached form.

As flagged previously the transferee is frustrated and unable to understand why we cannot simply return him to Syria based on his request.

I am wondering if in the first instance it would be best to use the TRACE team to approach the Syrian Consulate to ascertain if they are able to assist s. 47F(1) to best mitigate any false hope? As well as their ability to forward date any ETD?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Nauru Offshore Processing Centre
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 4:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

[REDACTED] – please note info below from [REDACTED]

Given the timeframes and uncertainties involved, and your knowledge of the person, I think you are best placed to judge whether you wish to get the TD process started. I imagine any AVR-related communications with s. 47F(1) will need to include counselling around the timeframes and uncertainties as set out below.

Happy to discuss

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Offshore Detention and Returns Task Group
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]
E: offshore.settlement.taskforce@immi.gov.au

Sensitive

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 1:46 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

It seems clear that s. 47F(1) is a Palestinian national, not a Syrian. However, given his long-term and (apparently) lawful residence in Syria, there may be scope for him to be granted some form of travel document or alternatively a written right of re-entry into Syria which could be used in conjunction with an Australian Certificate of Identity (COI). Of course, the Syrian authorities may simply state that as a non-Syrian citizen, he is ineligible for a travel document or a written right-of-re-entry. An approach will need to be made to Syrian authorities to establish what assistance they may be able to provide in this case.

The Embassy of Syria in Canberra closed in 2012 following a downgrading of our diplomatic ties. However, the Syrian Consulate-General in Sydney remains open. We will need to request the assistance of the Travel Document Requests and Consular Enquiries (TRACE) team in relation to an approach to the Consulate-General.

In advance of an approach being made to the C-G, I suggest the client should complete the attached travel document application form.

Standard requirements and timeframes for Syrian travel document applications (previous advice from TRACE):

- DIBP cover letter explaining the need for a travel document
- 2 x completed and signed application forms (dual copy attached)
- Evidence of Syrian citizenship
- 4 x passport photographs
- Application fee (amount TBC)

There is no definitive timeframe for obtaining a Syrian document. Over the past two years I have only been required to obtain one Syrian Travel Document. It was a lengthy and tricky process. It can take up to 6 months to obtain the approval to issue the document from the Syrian Foreign Ministry. Once approval is obtained the document is issued at the Syrian Embassy in Jakarta and is then sent to the Sydney Consulate. **The document only has a validity of 10 days from issuance.** On one occasion the document reached us after the expiry date and we needed to cancel the removal and obtain a new document from Jakarta. Although they would not extend the validity date they did agree to record the issuance date in the future, therefore, allowing a little more flexibility, however, the document only reached DIBP two hours prior to the removal.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
P.O. Box 25, BELCONNEN ACT 2616

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Website: www.immi.gov.au

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 10:24 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 10:22 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hi [REDACTED]

As per [REDACTED] email below, the below transferees claims he was born and has resided in Syria since that time. Attached are a number of original documents that state that he is a Palestinian national.

Could you please advise if he would be eligible for a Syrian travel document?

Grateful for any advice you can provide me

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Regards

[REDACTED]
Offshore Strategic and Coordination Section
Offshore Returns and Resettlement Branch
Department of Immigration and Border Protection
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sensitive

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 January 2014 8:08 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Request regarding a transferee request to return to Syria [DLM=Sensitive]

Sensitive

Hello All,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to you in relation to a complex case that has been raised here in Nauru.

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] claims he was born in Syria and has resided there since that time. He has a number of original documents with him here in property, which I have attached to this email. s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] travelled from Syria on a Palestinian Authority Card and does not currently hold a Syrian passport. His Syrian-issued identity card stated he is a Palestinian national. It is unclear if s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] would qualify for a Syrian travel document.

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

s. 47F(1) [REDACTED] is seeking urgent return to Syria and has previously had contact with IOM Nauru.

I would be grateful for any assistance or direction you can provide in this case. Please advise if I should be including others in this email.

Kind regards,

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Sensitive

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s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

----- Original Message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 09:42 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Copy To: Removals Helpdesk <removals.helpdesk@immi.gov.au>
Subject: Enquiry - Visas for Syria [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
UNCLASSIFIED
Hi [REDACTED]

I was hoping to receive some advice regarding Syrian visas and notification timeframes.

We are planning a voluntary Syrian removal on the week of the 07/04/2014. Escorts and RLOs will be accompanying detainee to Syria via Abu Dhabi and Amman.

I checked Timatic for visa requirements but wanted to double check. Timatic indicates that no visa is required for normal/official passport holders for transit in Syria. Are you able to confirm this?

Also, are there any notification timeframes for a removal to Syria? Similar to notification to post for Afghan removals?

Thank you,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
NSW Travel Unit
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1)

[REDACTED] response:

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi [REDACTED],

The Syrian Embassy in Canberra closed in 2012 after being expelled by the Australian Government.

Consequently all travel document and consular matters in respect to removal of Syrian nationals are now channelled through to the Syrian Consulate-General in Sydney via TRACE.

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Visa information provided on the Syrian Consulate-General's website unfortunately does not extend to transit visa requirements for normal/official Australian passport holders.

Naryl, are you able to shed some light on whether transit visas are required and whether the Syrian Consulate-General requires pre-removal notification?

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Returns and Removals Strategy and Support Section
Compliance and Case Resolution Division
Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[REDACTED]
s. 47F(1) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

UNCLASSIFIED