

From: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Cc: [Majgen Craig FURINI](#); [DLO](#); [Dutton Policy Advisers](#); [Jaycob MCMAHON](#); s. 22(1)(a) [Media Operations](#); [MO Registration](#)
Subject: FOR NOTING: Talking Points on self harm and influencers [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 27 August 2019 1:56:52 PM
Attachments: [190827 - TPs on self harm and influencers.docx](#)

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

My sincere apologies for the delay in getting these talking points to you. Please find attached TPs as requested around self-harm incidents that support the Department's understanding of influential transferees encouraging self-harm.

Kind Regards,

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

Media Operations

Department of Home Affairs

Media line: 02 6264 2244

E: media@homeaffairs.gov.au

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TALKING POINTS

Subject	Influencers and Self Harm		
Date	27 August 2019		
Type	Agency		
Media Officer:	s. 22(1)(a)(ii)		Media Ph: 02 6264 2244

ISSUE

Talking points around self-harm incidents that support the Department's understanding of influential transferees encouraging self-harm.

TALKING POINTS UNCLASSIFIED

- The Department of Home Affairs has seen a correlation between an increase in the number of self-harm incidents (threatened or actual), the introduction of the Phelps Bill in December 2018 and following the introduction of new medical transfer provisions in March 2019.
 - In March 2019, there were 60 incidents of self-harm and threats of self-harm across both PNG and Nauru. This is a 15% increase from February 2019 (52 incidents of self-harm, threatened and actual) and a 130% increase from March 2019 (26 incidents of self-harm, threatened and actual).
- The Department has intelligence to suggest that certain influential transferees are encouraging transferees in PNG and Nauru to self-harm (threatened or actual) as a means of settling in Australia.
 - Coaching and influencing of, and amongst transferees, across a range of issues is not new.
 - The provisions of the Miscellaneous Measures Act do not provide the express power to remove or return a transitory person brought to Australia under its provision; which is perceived to be a pathway to settlement. The Act's potential repeal is also possibly influencing behaviour.
 - This does not imply that there are not genuine medical cases and incidents of self-harm (threatened or actual) occurring in PNG and Nauru.

CLEARANCE

Drafted by	Title	Time/Date drafted
s. 22(1)(a)(ii)	Media Advisor	27/8/19

Cleared by	Title	Time/Date cleared
MAJGEN Furini	CJATF	27/8/19

MO noted	Sent to MO	Noted by MO
Full Name	Time DD Month 2018	Time DD Month 2018

From: [DLO](#)
To: [Alana SULLIVAN](#); [Majgen Craig FURINI](#)
Cc: [JATF-Coordination](#); [Regional Processing Taskforce](#); [DLO](#); [Ministerial Support](#)
Subject: MS19-001424 unsigned by Minister - request to finalise [SEC=PROTECTED]
Date: Wednesday, 11 September 2019 7:47:02 PM
Attachments: [MS19-001424 DSP Signed.pdf](#)

~~PROTECTED~~

Good evening CJATF and Alana,

The attached Ministerial Submission was received in Minister Dutton's office on 12 July 2019. The Minister has not considered the submission, however it has been noted by Deputy Chief of Staff, [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#), as Overtaken by Events.

The office requests that this submission be finalised without further action or signature.

Please advise if you agree to the submission being closed, or if you'd like to discuss this approach with [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#).

Regards,

[s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

[s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

Senior Departmental Liaison Officer
Office of the Hon Peter Dutton MP
Minister for Home Affairs
Suite MG.46, Parliament House, Canberra

P: [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#) | M: [s. 22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

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Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs

<p>RECEIVED</p> <p>08 JUL 2019</p> <p>in the Office of Deputy Secretary Policy Correspondence No: 957</p>

Submission
For decision

PDMS Ref. Number MS19-001424

To Minister for Home Affairs

Subject Regional Processing Papua New Guinea: Transferee Self-Harm

Timing As soon as practicable.

Recommendations

That you:

1. Note the increasing incidents of self-harm in Papua New Guinea; noted / please discuss

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

Minister for Home Affairs

Signature.....

Date:...../...../2019

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Minister's Comments				

Rejected Yes/No	Timely Yes/No	Relevance <input type="checkbox"/> Highly relevant <input type="checkbox"/> Significantly relevant <input type="checkbox"/> Not relevant	Length <input type="checkbox"/> Too long <input type="checkbox"/> Right length <input type="checkbox"/> Too brief	Quality Poor 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 Excellent Comments:

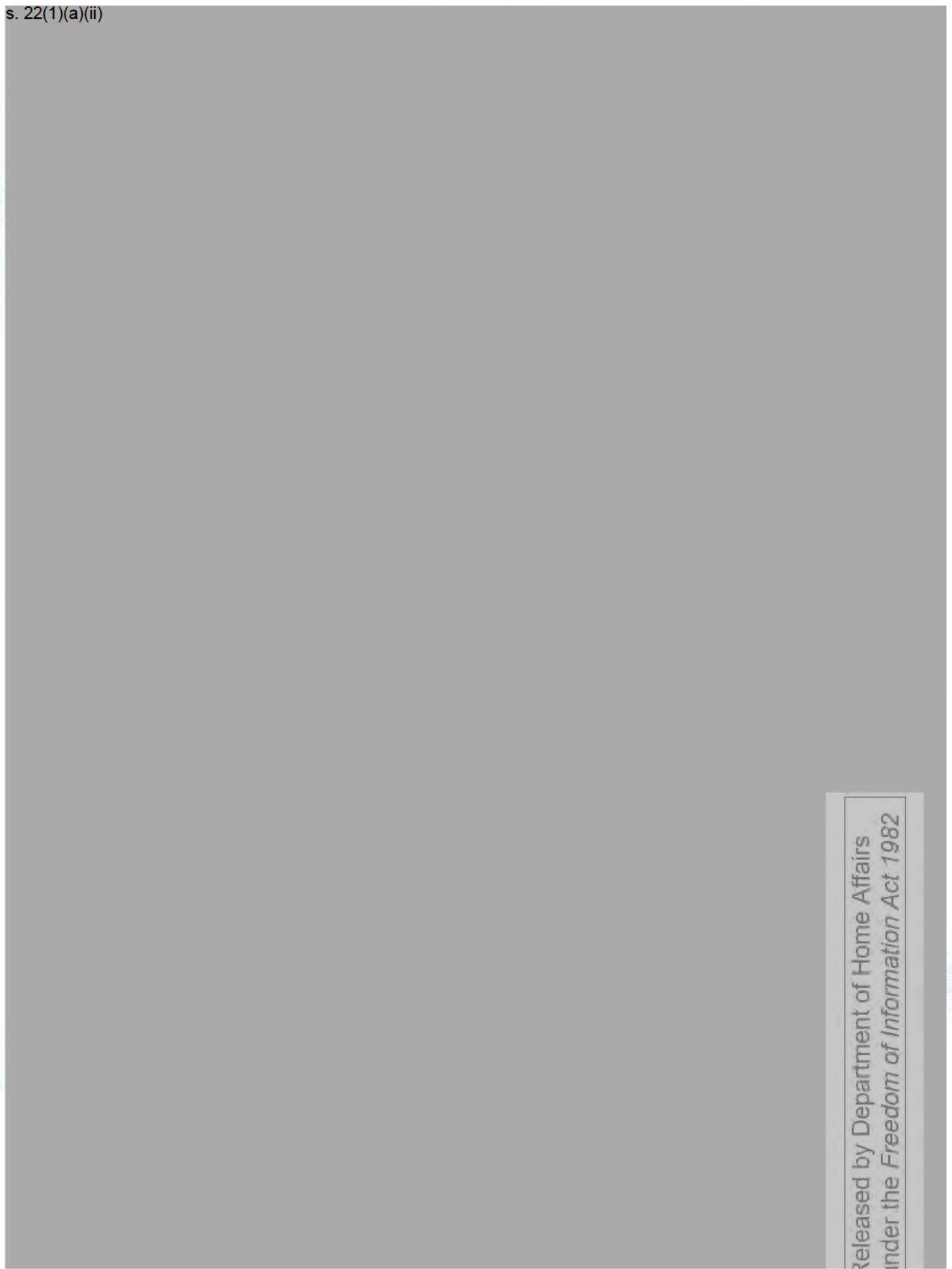
Key Issues

1. As at 3 July 2019, there are 470 transferees in PNG: 351 refugees and 119 failed asylum seekers.
2. Since late 2018, and through 2019, there has been an upwards trend in the number of self-harm related incidents amongst the Papua New Guinea cohort. Attachment A outlines self-harm (threat and actual) incidents in Papua New Guinea between 1 June 2018 to 3 July 2019, including transfers to Australia.
3. Notably, self-harm incidents increased during the parliamentary debate on the Migration Act (the *Home Affairs Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Act 2019*), and more significantly since the Australian Federal Election.
 - a. Between 19 May 2019 and 3 July 2019 there were 140 self-harm incidents. This represents a 233% increase on the previous six weeks.
4. Advice from service providers is that self-harm incidents are largely driven by a desire to transfer to Australia.
 - a. Between 2 March 2019 and 3 July 2019, 17 of the 26 individuals transferred from Papua New Guinea to Australia under section 198E of the *Migration Act 1958* were on mental health grounds. Of these, eight are recorded as having threatened or self-harmed since the *Miscellaneous Measures Act* achieved Royal Assent on 2 March 2019. Attachment B outlines the medical transfers to Australia from Papua New Guinea between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019.
5. While self-harm incidents are increasing, the general severity is reported as superficial. Regardless, the Department, the Papua New Guinea Immigration and Citizenship Authority and service providers treat all incidents seriously and work to minimise serious injury or death. Notwithstanding, as long as individuals are engaging in these acts, the latent risk of serious injury or death is high.

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Consultation – internal/external

16. Property Major Contracts Division; the contracted Health Service Provider – Pacific International Hospital.

Consultation – Secretary

17. The Secretary was consulted on the approach in the submission.

Sensitivities

18. There continues to be heightened media reporting on self-harm incidents by transferees both in Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Financial/systems/legislation/deregulation/media implications

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

21. The information contained in this submission is classified and should not be publicly released without the authority of the Department of Home Affairs. In accordance with our long standing practices, should you wish for unclassified media lines to be prepared in relation to this issue please contact the Home Affairs Media Coordination team
– media@homeaffairs.gov.au

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Attachments

Attachment A: Self-harm incidents 1 June 2018 – 30 June 2019

Attachment B: Medical transfers to Australia from PNG between 1 June 2018 – 3 July 2019

Authorising Officer
Cleared by: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)
Marc Ablong PSM Deputy Secretary Policy
Date: 9 July 2019 Ph: 02 s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

Contact Officer Alana Sullivan, Senior Assistant Secretary, Regional Processing Taskforce, Ph: s. 22(1)(a)(ii)

CC Secretary
Commander Joint Agency Taskforce Operation Sovereign Borders
Deputy Secretary Corporate and Enabling Group
First Assistant Secretary Health Services Policy and Child Wellbeing
Chief Finance Officer

Pages 10 to 26 have been removed as irrelevant information under section 22(1)(a)(ii) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) Act (1982)

- Acknowledge the increase in self-harming behaviour by transferees in Papua New Guinea.
 - Transferees are provided with a range of health, welfare and support services.
 - Notwithstanding, we have asked health and welfare providers to bolster support services delivered in Manus Province and Port Moresby and explore additional in-patient health services for transferees with mental health conditions.
 - We expect this behaviour is occurring for a number of reasons, including:
 - loss of hope and frustration over time in Manus Province
 - encouragement by advocates, and
 - to qualify for medical transfer under the new medical transfer legislation.
 - Transferees have identified the medical transfer legislation (introduced in Australia in March 2019) as a pathway to Australia.
 - While we are working to repeal the legislation to remove the pathway, we unfortunately expect the self-harming behaviour to continue, regardless of additional supports, until the repeal of the provisions occurs.
 - We seek Immigration and Citizenship Authority's ongoing support to stabilise and respond to this situation.
- Viable and durable migration outcomes will play an important role in managing this behaviour.

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- Acknowledge the increase in self-harming behaviour by transferees in Papua New Guinea.
 - Transferees are provided with a range of health, welfare and support services.
 - Notwithstanding, we have asked health and welfare providers to bolster support services delivered in Manus Province and Port Moresby and explore additional in-patient health services for transferees with mental health conditions.
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- Acknowledge the increase in self-harming behaviour by transferees in Papua New Guinea.
 - Health and welfare service providers have been requested to bolster support services delivered in Manus Province and Port Moresby and explore additional in-patient health services for transferees with mental health conditions.
 - Transferees have identified the medical transfer legislation (introduced in Australia in March 2019) as a pathway to Australia.
 - While we are working to repeal the legislation to remove the pathway, we unfortunately expect the self-harming behaviour to continue, regardless of additional supports, until the repeal of the provisions occurs.
- Viable and durable migration outcomes will play an important role in managing this behaviour.

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- Acknowledge the increase in self-harming behaviour by transferees in Papua New Guinea.
 - Health and welfare providers have been requested to bolster support services delivered in Manus Province and Port Moresby and explore additional in-patient health services for transferees with mental health conditions.
 - Transferees have identified the medical transfer legislation (introduced in Australia in March 2019) as a pathway to Australia.
 - While we are working to repeal the legislation to remove the pathway, we unfortunately expect the self-harming behaviour to continue, regardless of additional supports, until the repeal of the provisions occurs.

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- Viable and durable migration outcomes will play an important role in managing this behaviour.

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Medical transfers to Australia

- The *Home Affairs Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Act 2019* introduced new medical transfer provisions for transferees in regional processing countries (effective 2 March 2019).
 - As at 10 July 2019, 39 individuals, all from Papua New Guinea, have transferred to Australia for medical or psychiatric assessment or treatment under section 198E of the Act.
- In parallel, the Department of Home Affairs continues to facilitate medical transfers to Australia, under existing/alternative provisions, in cases where medical treatment is not available in Papua New Guinea.
 - Since 2 March 2019, nine individuals have transferred from Papua New Guinea to Australia for medical treatment under standard medical transfer processes.
- The *Migration Amendment (Repairing Medical Transfers) Bill 2019* was referred by the Senate to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee.
 - The Bill repeals the provisions inserted into the *Migration Act 1958* by Schedule 6 to the *Miscellaneous Measures Act 2019* and introduces a returns and removals mechanism.

Self-harm

- Since December 2018, there has been a substantial increase in self-harming behaviours (threats and actual) across the regional processing population in Papua New Guinea.
 - The behaviour has been reported extensively through the media.
- The rate of self-harm incidents started rising in December 2018, when the Phelps Bill was first introduced, increased following the introduction of new medical transfer legislation in March 2019, and further increased following the federal election in May 2019.
- The intensity and gravity of incidents has increased, with transferees buoyed by medical transfers to Australia and heightened media coverage. Transferees now see medical transfer as a viable pathway to Australia.
- In response, contracted service providers have bolstered care to transferees:
 - increasing the capacity of the temporary respite site at Manus;
 - introducing 24-hour onsite mental health services; and
 - broadening outreach welfare and mental health services across Manus accommodation sites.

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- The Department of Home Affairs has requested contracted service providers submit additional proposals to respond to increasing self-harm incidents, including the potential to utilise hospitals across Papua New Guinea to increase the number of accessible in-patient beds and expanding the capacity of the permanent respite accommodation at the East Lorengau Refugee Transit Centre (currently under construction).

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