



Refugee Council of Australia

Media Release – for immediate release

18 April, 2010

Reopening Curtin a step backwards for reform

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) strongly criticises government plans to house asylum seekers in Curtin defence facility near Derby WA.

"The use of Curtin defence facility to house asylum seekers is completely inappropriate. It is one of the most remote places in Australia and facilities would have to be built. This population of asylum seekers will include torture and trauma survivors, and services for them will be nigh on impossible to deliver." Paul Power, CEO of the Refugee Council of Australia, said.

"It is hard to think of any good policy reason to pick this remote location instead of locations closer to available services," Mr Power said.

Curtin immigration detention facility was notorious for being among the worst of all the onshore detention centres. It attempted to use demountables for long-term accommodation, with the added problem of being very remote.

"There is next to nothing there. Why on earth would you choose to reopen Curtin as an immigration detention centre when there are so more credible, humane and effective approaches which could be adopted?" Mr Power said.

"While we are pleased to see the unaccompanied children removed from Christmas Island, it is important that those moved to the Baxter residential housing facility near Port Augusta have access to high quality services and not have their liberty constrained."

Media enquiries:
Kate Gauthier
0414 876 139