



MEDIA RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

CASE for Refugees

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Asylum seekers sleep on the floor

CASE for Refugees Joint Principal Solicitor, Shayla Strapps, says that she was upset and flabbergasted that 3 asylum seekers who have been given bridging visas are sleeping on the floor. Ms Strapps visited the home last night and house that the men are in has no furniture save for a fridge and washing machine. There are no beds, tables, chairs or couches. The men are sleeping on a mat on the floor and also have no blankets.

Ms Strapps says *“The situation here is in stark contrast to media reports that claim that refugees get showered with luxury goods like plasma TV’s. These men have nothing and do not have the resources to find the goods they need at a price they can afford. The Department of Immigration provide meagre resources to various organisations to provide settlement services to asylum seekers. These resources are not sufficient and although these organisations do the best that they can, they just can’t provide the support necessary.”*

Ms Strapps says that she will now rally support from the community to help to furnish this house. *“The men don’t know anyone, so even if they can make their way to Good Sammy’s to buy the furniture, how do they get it home? They don’t have a mate with a trailer that they can call.”*

CASE for Refugees applauds the government for providing bridging visas to offshore arrivals but implores the Minister to provide adequate settlement resources. *“Of course we must help asylum seekers gain the skills to live in the community. But there is a very high level of support needed for those first few months and the Department of Immigration just is not providing the money to provide that necessary level of support. The government need to stop grandstanding about the amount of people they are releasing onto bridging visas and concentrate instead on resourcing the program properly”*

The asylum seekers do not want to be identified for fear of consequences in their refugee processing but they are very upset at the lack of furniture. Ms Strapps says *“They just want some chairs to sit on and a mattress to sleep on – a very reasonable request”*.

About CASE for Refugees

CASE for Refugees is Western Australia’s only Community Legal Centre providing legal services to refugees, asylum seekers and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) communities. Operating since 2002, CASE has assisted thousands of clients from over 36 countries many of whom have been victims of torture and trauma.

In 2011, CASE’s Principle Solicitors, Amanda Goodier and Shayla Strapps were awarded the prestigious WA Law Society’s Lawyers of the Year Award in recognition of their work and service.