

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Government must reinstate phone and internet access to asylum seekers

Canberra, 6th November 2017

Digital Rights Watch Australia and Electronic Frontiers Australia today urge the Australian Government to ensure that the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees being held in offshore detention camps on Manus Island (Papua New Guinea) and Nauru are respected.

The Australian Government's offshore processing system which has established these camps has resulted in violations of various rights protected under international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Angela Daly from Digital Rights Watch Australia said, "The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has made it very clear that Australia has an ongoing responsibility to the individuals whom it has transferred to Manus and Nauru under this system. This includes their right to communicate by phone and Internet."

EFA Chair Lyndsey Jackson said, "The detainees on Manus and Nauru do not have adequate access to phone and Internet communications, in breach of their right to free expression. Australia needs to honour its obligations under these treaties, in particular Article 19 of the UDHR and ICCPR which guarantees the right to free expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds. In particular, Australia should reinstate asylum seekers phone and internet communications in the Manus Island camp, which have recently been removed."

About EFA

Established in January 1994, Electronic Frontiers Australia (EFA) is a national, membership-based non-profit organisation representing Internet users concerned with digital freedoms and rights.

EFA is independent of government and commerce, and is funded by membership subscriptions and donations from individuals and organisations with an altruistic interest in promoting civil liberties in the digital context. EFA members and supporters come from all parts of Australia and from diverse backgrounds.



EFA's major objectives are to protect and promote the civil liberties of users of digital communications systems (such as the Internet) and of those affected by their use and to educate the community at large about the social, political and civil liberties issues involved in the use of digital communications systems.

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