

The ‘unquantifiable cost’ of the PNG asylum deal

By Ashlee Betteridge

24 July 2013

While there has been much talk on the role of aid as the bargaining chip in the PNG asylum seeker arrangement, Rowan Callick from The Australian perhaps best hit the nail on the head in describing the true costs of the deal, not to Australia but to PNG.

“It is the unquantifiable cost of having the nation of PNG presented as a place that is sufficiently unattractive that it can act as a deterrent even to people desperate to flee their home countries,” Callick [wrote](#).

Deni ToKunai also wrote for Lowy Interpreter on [the damage that the deal has done](#) for Australia’s reputation in PNG.

In further developments, Manus Island MP Ronnie Knight [told the 7.30 Report](#) that it would likely take a further two years to complete permanent facilities on Manus, confirming [Stephen Howes’ analysis](#) that time lags will weaken the credibility of the PNG deal. MP Knight also indicated that the proposed site for the facility would be contentious because it was too close to an urban area.

The Solomon Islands government may also [talk about hosting offshore detention centres](#) during Foreign Minister Bob Carr’s visit this week.

About the author/s

Ashlee Betteridge

Ashlee Betteridge was the Manager of the Development Policy Centre until April 2021. She was previously a Research Officer at the centre from 2013-2017. A former journalist, she holds a Master of Public Policy (Development Policy) from ANU and has development experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. She now has her own consultancy, Better Things Consulting, and works across several large projects with managing contractors.

Link: <https://devpolicy.org/the-unquantifiable-cost-of-the-png-asylum-deal/>

Date downloaded: 24 April 2024



Australian
National
University

The Devpolicy Blog is based at the Development Policy Centre, Crawford School of Public Policy, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University.