

## strategies for Deportees

### Details

Last Updated: Wednesday, 26 November 2014 18:51

December 2008

Destitute asylum seekers may be arrested at any time and sent to a detention centre. Although a few of them may be able to find new evidence and a lawyer willing to appeal against deportation or removal\*, many have to face the fact that they will have to return to their home countries.

\*Technically, asylum seekers who have committed a criminal offence are 'deported': others are 'removed'.

### **Prior to this, it is advisable for the visitor to**

- Ensure that the client knows to contact solicitor ASAP after arrest
- Advise client that non-cooperation with Immigration Authorities may lead to criminal prosecution. The choice is then his/hers.
- Request copies of the client's legal documents, in particular, the original asylum application, and the correspondence relating to refusal. (This is particularly important if the AS's property is lost in the transfer - one recent detainee had left his papers behind in his room and it was only because a SWVG member found them that they could be forwarded to him in detention)
- Failing this, it is very useful to have the client's date of birth, Port Ref No and Home Office No.
- Have details of the solicitor
- Know the name and contact details of close friends and/or relatives in the UK who can be contacted and may be able to support.
- Find out if there are any contacts in their own country, and contact numbers and addresses, in case of sudden removal.

### **After arrest**

- If the AS has been taken to a removal centre without his/her possessions, it is possible to arrange for a reasonable amount of luggage to be delivered.
- Contact someone on the Executive committee for advice about MP intervention etc.
- The AS cannot be removed without a Travel Document so find out if there is a valid passport. If the AS does not have one, check with the Home Office. Ask the AS if he/she has been interviewed by Embassy/High Commission and what happened.
- Find out if there are any restrictions on removal to AS's country, or if the country is known to be

**Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group** *Working with asylum seekers and refugees*

**Patrons:** Miriam Margolyes OBE, John Pilkington, Dr Shirley Firth **Registered charity:** 1103093

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very slow in issuing documents. (Check with BID)

- Check the possibility of bail. For this, the AS needs a 'permanent' address. He/she can get advice on how to make an application by reading BID Notebook on Bail in the Removal Centre library.
- Sureties are helpful, though not essential, for bail. We cannot legally, as an organisation, stand bail. Individual WVG members have stood surety for AS in the past, but if the person then “disappears” the visitor is likely to lose his/her bail money (or a proportion of it.)
- If a visitor does stand surety, it is necessary to maintain frequent contact with the AS, and inform the courts immediately if the person does disappear (this has happened about four times so far, in four years).

**N.B.** It is possible to challenge removal on the grounds that it is unsafe to return to the home country.

### Visits to Removal Centres

- It is obviously important to maintain contact with our client but phone calls can be difficult to make. It helps to find out the client’s room number and the direct line (if there is one).
- As a visitor, you need to take a photo ID with you and you won’t be allowed to take mobile phone/keys etc into the visiting room.
- If you cannot visit, we can contact one of the local visitors groups for Harmondsworth, Colnbrook, Yarl’s Wood, Tinsley House (Gatwick) and Haslar.
- It is important to encourage the AS to plan for the future – whatever that may be.

### Deportation strategies

- Try to think of someone who would tell us whether they have arrived safely, or ask the deportee to get in touch with us if they can.
- Help the AS to think through what they might do and where they could go for a place of safety.
  - o A church or mosque
  - o International Red Cross
  - o UN
  - o An aid agency

(We are in process of trying to develop some ideas here for different countries, and will draw on similar ideas from other agencies.)

- Think realistically about other towns they could go to, and work / education they might do.
- Give them £60 in \$US dollars from the group - small denomination bills (\$5, \$1 bills)
- If the AS has money in UK, it may be possible to arrange for the money to be transferred to his/her home country via Western Union.

### Contacts:

- **Jenny Cuffe** (has experience of the Congo (DRC)) - 01962 860450
- **Southampton Immigration:** Tim Niblock and colleagues out of hours 023 8082 0147
- **Portsmouth Immigration:** 023 9295 2700

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- **John Denham MP:** 023 8033 9807 e-mail: [office@johndenham.org.uk](mailto:office@johndenham.org.uk)
- **Alan Whitehead MP:** 023 8023 1942 email: [post@alan-whitehead.org.uk](mailto:post@alan-whitehead.org.uk)
- **Steve Brine MP** 01962 791110
- **BID South** (for advice about bail): 02392 587567

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