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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Presented and read a first time

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

No. , 2018

(Mr Wilkie)

A Bill for an Act to provide a legislative response to all people seeking asylum in Australia, and for related purposes

Contents

Part 1–	–Prelimina	iry	1
	1	Short title	1
	2	Commencement	2
	3	Simplified outline and object of this Act	2
	4	Act binds the Crown	3
	5	Definitions	3
	6	Application—international agreements for the protection of rights	4
	7	Severability	5
	8	Principle of family unity	6
	8A	Principle of the rights and best interests of the child	6
Part 2_	-Enabling	of APASS	8
	9	Intention that parties to APASS be legally bound	8
	10	APASS centres	8
	11	Meaning of APASS applicant and APASS applicant to Australia	8
	12	Australian quota of APASS applicants	9
	13	Determination of transfer arrangements of APASS applicants to Australia	9
	14	APASS case officers	
Part 3–	–Immigrat	ion detention	12
	15	Relationship with other laws	12
	16	Immigration detention	12
	17	Alternatives to immigration detention	12
	18	Access to assistance in alternatives to immigration detention	13
	19	Timeframes for the determination of alternatives to immigration detention	13
	20	Revocation or variation of restrictions	14
	21	Reasons for immigration detention	14
	22	Time frames for immigration detention	15
	23	Information provided to detainees	16
	24	Access to services in detention	16
	25	Communication for the purpose of obtaining immigration assistance and immigration legal assistance	16
	26	Children in detention	
	27	Independent monitoring	18
Part 4–	–Adverse s	ecurity assessments	20

No. , 2018

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

i

28	Adverse security assessments	20
Part 5—Review	of decisions	21
29	Review of decisions	21
Part 6—Jurisdic	tion of courts	22
30	Jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court	
Part 7—Miscella	neous	23
31	Regulations	23

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

No. , 2018

ii

A Bill for an Act to provide a legislative response to

- ² all people seeking asylum in Australia, and for
- **3 related purposes**
- ⁴ The Parliament of Australia enacts:
- 5 **Part 1—Preliminary**
- 7 **1 Short title**

8

This Act is the *Refugee Protection Act 2018*.

No. , 2018

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

2 Commencement

(1)	Each provision of this Act specified in column 1 of the table
	commences, or is taken to have commenced, in accordance with
	column 2 of the table. Any other statement in column 2 has effect
	according to its terms.

Commencement Column 1		offormation Column 2	Column 3
Provisions		Commencement	Date/Details
1. The who this Act	ole of	The day after this Act receives the Roya Assent.	1
	Note:	This table relates only to the provisions of enacted. It will not be amended to deal wit this Act.	
(2)	Inform	nformation in column 3 of the table is a nation may be inserted in this column, be edited, in any published version of the	or information in it
3 Simplifi		tline and object of this Act	
(1)	This A in and	Act enables the establishment of a network run by Asia Pacific countries includin n seekers can go to be registered, have	ng Australia, where
	human re-sett the sp their c	nitarian needs met and lodge a preferent element. If the asylum seeker selects A ecified quota, this Act establishes a pro- claim in Australia with appropriate over ames and judicial review.	nce for country of Australia, and is withi ocess for assessing

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1	Object of this Act
2 3 4 5	(3) The object of this Act is to provide a legislative response to people seeking asylum in Australia, through the Asia Pacific Region, that is sustainable, equitable and humane, and subject to appropriate oversight and review;
6 7 8 9 10 11 12	 (4) To advance its object, this Act: (a) enables a regional framework initiated by the Australian Government in partnership with one or more other countries within the Asia Pacific region; and (b) upholds Australia's obligations under international law, specifically the Refugees Convention and other international human rights law.
13	4 Act binds the Crown
14	This Act binds the Crown in each of its capacities.
15	5 Definitions
16	(1) In this Act:
17 18	<i>adverse security assessment</i> has the same meaning as in Part IV of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act 1979.
19 20 21	APASS (short for Asia Pacific Asylum Seeker Solution) means the regional framework to manage movements of asylum seekers within the Asia Pacific region:
22 23 24	 (a) that is consistent with the Refugees Convention, the Refugees Protocol, the New York Declaration and other international human rights law; and
25 26	(b) to which Australia and one or more other countries within the Asia Pacific region are parties.
27	APASS applicant: see subsection 11(1).
28	APASS applicant to Australia: see subsection 11(2).
29 30	APASS Australian quota for a year means the quota for the year determined under section 12.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Section	6
Section	σ

	APASS centre: see section 10.
	APASS processing conditions has the same meaning as in APA
	Note: The APASS processing conditions under APASS include (but are limited to) the following:
	 limited to) the following: (a) the timeframes and details of a visa application (including the process of triage, security and health checks and required documentation);
	(b) specific rights regarding freedom of movement;
	(c) specific assistance needs (including but not limited to, housir income, work rights and health);
	 (d) any specific protection concerns (such as women at risk, perswith disabilities, unaccompanied minors, victims of traffickin victims of trauma and survivors of sexual violence, as well as older persons).
	IGIS means the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security.
	<i>international human rights law</i> means the international agreements referred to in section 6.
	Migration Act means the Migration Act 1958.
	<i>New York Declaration</i> means the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, done at New York on 19 September 20
	principle of family unity has a meaning affected by section 8.
	<i>principle of the rights and best interests of the child</i> has a meaning affected by section 8A.
	Secretary means the Secretary of the Department.
(2)	An expression used in this Act that is defined for the purposes of the Migration Act has the same meaning in this Act as it has in Migration Act.
6 Applica	tion—international agreements for the protection of rig
	This Act does not apply to the extent (if any) to which it is inconsistent with any of the following international agreements:

4

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1		(a)	the Refugees Convention;
2			the Refugees Protocol;
3			the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, done
4		(0)	at New York on 16 December 1966 ([1980] ATS 23);
5		(d)	the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman
6		~ /	and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done at New York
7			on 10 December 1984 ([1989] ATS 21);
8		(e)	the Convention on the Rights of the Child, done at New York
9			on 20 November 1989 ([1991] ATS 4);
10		(f)	the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural
11			Rights, done at New York on 16 December 1966 ([1976]
12			ATS 5);
13		(g)	the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of
14			Discrimination against Women, done at New York on
15		(1 -)	18 December 1979 ([1983] ATS 9); the Convertion on the Bights of Persons with Dischilition
16 17		(n)	the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, done at New York on 13 December 2006 ([2008] ATS 12).
18 19		Note:	The text of an international agreement in the Australian Treaty Series (ATS) could in 2018 be viewed in the Australian Treaties Library on
20			the AustLII website (http://www.austlii.edu.au).
21	7 Severabi	lity	
22	(1)	With	out limiting the effect of this Act apart from this section, this
23			lso has effect as provided by this section.
24	(2)	Тол	void doubt, no subsection of this section limits the operation of
24 25			ther subsection of this section.
23		any 0	the subsection of this section.
26		Exter	nal affairs power
	(2)	TTI. : .	
27			Act has the effect it would have if its operation were expressly
28 29			ned to give effect to Australia's rights and obligations under reement with one or more countries.
27		an ag	reement with one of more countries.
30			Act has the effect it would have if its operation were expressly
31			ned to acts or omissions that occur beyond the limits of the
32		States	s and Territories.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Section	8	

	(5) This Act has the effect it would have if its operation were expressly
	confined to matters that are of international concern.
	Aliens power
	(6) This Act has the effect it would have if its operation were expressly
	confined to:
	(a) exercising a power or performing a function that affects an alien (within the meaning of paragraph 51(xix) of the
	Constitution); or
	(b) conferring a right or imposing an obligation on such an alien.
8 Pr	inciple of family unity
	(1) The Parliament affirms that the principle of family unity should be
	adopted in conformity with the obligation to protect the family and
	respect family life, subject to the best interests of the child, as enshrined in many instruments of international law.
	(2) The principle of family unity must be a paramount consideration in
	any decision or other action taken for the purposes of this Act.
	(3) The <i>principle of family unity</i> includes the principles that:
	(a) a country should refrain from taking actions that would discust members of a family unit of a person; and
	disrupt members of a family unit of a person; and (b) a country should take action to allow members of a family
	unit of a person that are dispersed to be reunited without
	returning them to a country where they would face danger.
	Note: The expression <i>member of the family unit</i> of a person is defined for the purposes of the Migration Act.
8A I	Principle of the rights and best interests of the child
	(1) The principle of the rights and best interests of the child must be a
	paramount consideration in any decision or other action:
	(a) taken for the purposes of this Act; and
	(b) that affects a child.
	(2) The <i>principle of the rights and best interests of the child</i> includes:
	(a) the principle of family unity; and
6	Define a Distortion Dill 2019 No. 2019
6	Refugee Protection Bill 2018 No. , 2018

1	(b) the principle that a country should recognise and provide for
2	every child's inherent right to life and ensure to the
3	maximum extent possible the survival and development of
4	the child (including health and mental health services,
5	counselling and trauma services, phone and internet,
6	education, legal services and accommodation and financial
7	assistance); and
8	(c) the principle that a country should ensure that throughout the
9	APASS process children will be assured the right to express
10	their views freely in all matters affecting them, their views
11	being given due weight in accordance with the child's age
12	and level of maturity.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

9 Intentio	n that parties to APASS be legally bound
	Parliament recognises that it is the intention of APASS that eac
	party to APASS must be legally bound, either under internation law or domestic law, to provide effective protection for asylum
	seekers and refugees.
10 APASS	S centres
	An <i>APASS centre</i> is a centre established under APASS that satisfies the following conditions:
	 (a) the centre is developed in cooperation with, and funded b the parties to APASS;
	(b) the centre is developed in accordance with the Refugees
	Convention and the other international instruments referr to in section 6;
	(c) the centre is located strategically to enable ease of access
	making it a preferred alternative to seeking the service of people smugglers.
11 Meani	ng of APASS applicant and APASS applicant to Australia
(1)	A person is an <i>APASS applicant</i> if:
	(a) the person is an asylum seeker or refugee; and
	(b) the person is registered as an asylum seeker at an APASS centre.
(2)	An APASS applicant is an <i>APASS applicant to Australia</i> if:
	(a) upon registration, the person selected Australia as a host
	country; and
	(b) the person has been deemed, in accordance with APASS, fit within the APASS Australian quota for the year during
	which the person was registered; and
	(c) the person has been recommended, in accordance with APASS, to the Minister.

8

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1 2 3 4	(3) If a person is an APASS applicant to Australia, the Minister is responsible for that person and must ensure that the provisions of this Act are fully applied to the APASS applicant, subject to APASS and associated in-country agreements.
5	12 Australian quota of APASS applicants
6 7 8	(1) The Minister must, before the start of each year, declare by legislative instrument the quota of APASS applicants for that year that will be considered for permanent visas in Australia.
9 10 11	(2) The quota must be determined in accordance with APASS and with the principles of genuine responsibility and cost sharing between the parties to APASS.
12 13	13 Determination of transfer arrangements of APASS applicants to Australia
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	 (1) Within 60 working days after the day a person becomes an APASS applicant to Australia, the Secretary must determine: (a) that the APASS applicant will remain for processing at the APASS centre where the APASS applicant was registered as an asylum seeker; or (b) that the APASS applicant may enter Australia while their visa claim is being processed. (2) A determination under subsection (1):
22 23 24 25	(a) may relate to more than one APASS applicant; and(b) must specify each APASS applicant covered by the determination by name, not by description of a class of persons.
26	(3) A determination under subsection (1) is a legislative instrument.
27 28 29 30 31 32	 (4) The Secretary must, in making a determination under subsection (1), consider the following: (a) Australia's non-refoulement obligations; (b) the principle of family unity; (c) whether the APASS centre where the APASS applicant was registered is at capacity;

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Section	14
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1	(d) whether the APASS applicant is facing personal danger;
2	(e) whether the APASS applicant is an unaccompanied minor,
3	and the principle of the rights and best interests of the child;
4	(f) whether the APASS applicant has any health needs that
5	indicate the transfer to Australia is necessary;
6	(g) whether the transfer to Australia is necessary in regards to
7	enhancing burden and responsibility-sharing and regional
8	cooperation, and not burden shifting.
9	(5) Subsection (4) does not limit the matters that the Secretary may
10 11	consider in making a determination under subsection (1). However, Australia's obligations under international human rights law are to
11	be the Secretary's paramount consideration.
13	(6) If the Secretary determines, under subsection (1), that an APASS
14	applicant to Australia may enter Australia while their visa claim is
15	being processed, the APASS applicant must be individually
16	assessed as to the appropriateness of the conditions of transfer
17	(subject to procedural safeguards) prior to transfer. The procedural
18	safeguards include, but are not limited to, the following:
19 20	 (a) that the APASS applicant will be legally admitted to Australia;
21	(b) that the APASS applicant is both mentally and physically fit
22	for travel;
23	(c) any other safeguards prescribed by the regulations.
24	14 APASS case officers
25	(1) If it is determined under subsection 13(1) that an APASS applicant
26	will remain for processing at the APASS centre where the APASS
27	applicant was registered as an asylum seeker, an APASS case
28	officer must be allocated to the APASS applicant within 7 days.
29	(2) As soon as reasonably practicable after the allocation, the APASS
30	case officer must ensure that the APASS applicant is given:
31	(a) free and independent legal assistance and advice; and
32	(b) information regarding the APASS processing conditions.
34	(b) mornation regarding the AI ASS processing conditions.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1	(3) The APASS case officer must take all reasonable steps (including
2	liaising with Australian authorities):
3	(a) to ensure that a decision can be made on the APASS
4	applicant's visa application; and
5	(b) to assist the decision being made within 180 days from the
6	date of the application.
7	(4) The APASS case officer must ensure that the APASS applicant is
8	regularly informed about the process and status of the visa
9	application. The information must be given in a language and
10	format that the APASS applicant understands.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Par	t 3—Immigration detention
15 F	Relationship with other laws
	This Part applies in relation to all immigration detention in Australia, including detention in an APASS centre in Australia, despite any other law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territo (whether written or unwritten).
16 I	mmigration detention
	(1) The Parliament intends that immigration detention be:
	(a) lawful, under both international law and domestic law; and
	(b) necessary and proportionate; and
	(c) for the shortest time possible; and
	(d) in Australia.
	(2) The Parliament also intends that alternatives to detention are the preferred option to immigration detention for APASS applicant
17 A	Alternatives to immigration detention
	(1) If there is no reason under section 21 for one or more APASS
	applicants to be taken into, or kept in, immigration detention, th
	Secretary must, by legislative instrument, determine alternative
	immigration detention that are to apply in relation to the APASS applicant or applicants covered by the determination.
	(2) A determination under subsection (1) must permit the APASS applicant or applicants covered by the determination to live in t
	community in accordance with the restriction (if any) specified
	the determination. The restriction may be any one of the follow
	(a) a requirement to deposit or surrender documentation such
	passports;
	(b) reporting conditions, such as periodic reporting to an
	authority or organisation of a kind prescribed by the

12

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1		regulations (which may include, for example, an immigration
2		authority or a non-government organisation);
3		(c) a requirement that the APASS applicant must reside at a
4		specific address or within a particular suburb or area;
5		(d) a requirement to provide a guarantor or surety who would be
6		responsible for ensuring the APASS applicant's attendance at
7		official appointments and hearings and for ensuring that the
8		APASS applicant otherwise reports as specified in any
9		condition of release.
10		(3) If a determination under subsection (1) includes a requirement that
11		an APASS applicant deposit or surrender identification
12		documentation, the Secretary must ensure that the APASS
13		applicant is issued with alternative forms of identification.
14		(4) A copy of a determination under subsection (1) must be given to
15		the APASS applicant or applicants covered by the determination.
16	18	Access to assistance in alternatives to immigration detention
10	10	Access to assistance in alternatives to minigration detention
17		(1) If a determination under subsection $17(1)$ is in force that covers an
18		APASS applicant:
19		(a) adequate material support, accommodation and access to
20		means of self-sufficiency (including any necessary financial
21		support) must be provided to the APASS applicant; and
22		(b) the APASS applicant must have the right to work if the
23		APASS applicant is aged 16 or over; and
24		(c) the APASS applicant must have access to each service
25		prescribed for the purposes of subsection 24(1).
26		(2) Paragraphs (1)(b) and (c) have effect despite any other law of the
27		Commonwealth, a State or a Territory (whether written or
28		unwritten).
29	19	Timeframes for the determination of alternatives to immigration
29 30	1)	detention
50		
31		A determination under subsection 17(1) remains in force for:
32		(a) 6 months; or

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Secti	on 20
	(b) if, on application, the Federal Circuit Court makes an ord fixing a longer period—that period.
20 R	Revocation or variation of restrictions
	If a determination under subsection 17(1) is in force that covers APASS applicant, and the APASS applicant fails to comply wi the restriction specified in the determination, the Secretary may (a) revoke the determination; or (b) vary the restriction.
21 R	Reasons for immigration detention
	(1) An APASS applicant may be taken into, or kept in, immigratio
	detention only for one or more of the following reasons:
	(a) to document the APASS applicant's entry;
	(b) to record the APASS applicant's claims for asylum;
	(c) to determine the APASS applicant's identity;
	(d) to await health clearance so as to protect public health;
	(e) to await security clearance;
	(f) to prevent the APASS applicant from absconding if there evidence of a risk of the APASS applicant absconding;
	(g) if there is risk that the APASS applicant might destroy evidence or influence witnesses;
	(h) if an adverse security assessment has been made in respe- the APASS applicant.
	(2) An APASS applicant must not be taken into, or kept in,
	immigration detention for any of the following reasons:
	(a) the APASS applicant's mode of arrival (for example by
	boat);
	(b) irregular entry or stay, provided that the APASS applicar
	has presented themselves without delay to the authorities shown good cause for their irregular entry or stay;
	(c) executive order.
	(3) An APASS applicant must not be held in prison, with prisoners

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1 2		convicted of, or is being held in custody on remand in relation to, an offence against a law of the Commonwealth, a State or a
3		Territory that is punishable by imprisonment.
4 5	(4)	No APASS applicant may be subjected to arbitrary or mandatory detention.
6	22 Time f	rames for immigration detention
7 8 9	(1)	An APASS applicant (other than an APASS applicant referred to in subsection 26(2)) must not be kept in immigration detention for more than 3 months.
10		Note: Subsection 26(2) is about the detention of children.
11 12 13 14	(2)	On application, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia may extend, or further extend, that period by up to 6 months. The court may do so only if that period, or that period as last extended, has not yet ended.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	(3)	 In determining whether to make an order under subsection (2), the Federal Circuit Court of Australia must take into account the following: (a) that detention of APASS applicants should only occur as a measure of last resort and that there should be a general presumption against the detention; (b) whether there are any non-custodial measures available (for example the imposition of reporting obligations, sureties or other conditions); (c) the balancing of the rights to liberty, security and freedom of movement of the APASS applicant with the public policy
26 27	(4)	initiatives of detention. If the Federal Circuit Court of Australia makes an order under
28 29		subsection (2), the court may also make any other order the court considers appropriate to facilitate the APASS applicant not being
30 31		kept in immigration detention for longer than the extended, or further extended, period.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1	23 Information provided to detainees
2	Each APASS applicant that is taken into immigration detention
3	must be immediately informed (orally and in writing, and in a
4	language the APASS applicant understands) of the following:
5	(a) the reason for the APASS applicant's detention;
6	(b) the APASS applicant's legal rights in regards to the detention
7	(including the process of judicial review and the contact information for legal aid and consular assistance);
8 9	(c) the proposed time frame for the APASS applicant's
9 10	detention.
11	24 Access to services in detention
12	(1) The regulations may prescribe any or all of the following services
13	for APASS applicants in immigration detention:
14	(a) health and mental health services;
15	(b) counselling and trauma services;
16	(c) phone and internet;
17	(d) education;
18	(e) visiting services (including daily access to visitors, whether
19 20	they are known to the APASS applicant or part of a broader community or non-government service);
21 22	(f) government services (including immigration, housing and Centrelink services);
23	(g) free and independent legal services.
24	(2) An APASS applicant in immigration detention must have access to
25	each service prescribed for the purposes of subsection (1).
26	25 Communication for the purpose of obtaining immigration
27	assistance and immigration legal assistance
28	(1) In this section, <i>immigration assistance</i> and <i>immigration legal</i>
29	assistance have the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Migration
30	Act.

16

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1 2 3	(2) An APASS applicant in immigration detention is entitled, at any time during business hours, to communicate and consult regarding immigration assistance or immigration legal assistance.
4 5 6 7	(3) All reasonable efforts are to be made to facilitate an APASS applicant to communicate or consult, outside business hours, regarding immigration assistance or immigration legal assistance if the need to communicate or consult is urgent.
8 9 10	 (4) Adequate time and facilities are to be made available to an APASS applicant in detention for the purpose of receiving immigration assistance or immigration legal assistance.
11 12 13 14 15	(5) Without limiting subsection (4), an APASS applicant who is receiving immigration assistance or immigration legal assistance, or the APASS applicant's legal counsel, may be required to be within sight, but must not be required to be within hearing, of others (including immigration detention staff).
16	26 Children in detention
17 18	(1) It is the intention of Parliament that APASS applicants who are children:
19 20 21 22 23 24	 (a) should not be deprived of liberty, except as a measure of last resort; and (b) should be deprived of liberty only for the shortest appropriate period of time, taking into account the extreme vulnerability and need for care of children (particularly of unaccompanied minors).
25 26 27 28	(2) Without limiting subsection (1) or section 8A, an APASS applicant who is 18 years old or less, or who is reasonably suspected to be 18 years old or less, must not be kept in immigration detention for more than 7 days.
29 30 31 32	Note: Section 8A requires the principle of the rights and best interests of the child to be a paramount consideration in any decision or other action:(a) taken for the purposes of this Act; and(b) that affects a child.
33 34	(3) On application, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia may extend, or further extend, that period by up to 3 months. The court may do

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

Section 27

1 2	so only if that period, or that period as last extended, has not yet ended.
3	(4) If the APASS applicant is an unaccompanied minor, the first order
4	under subsection (3) in relation to the APASS applicant must be
5	obtained within 24 hours of the APASS applicant being taken into
6	immigration detention or as close as possible to that time.
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	 (5) In determining whether to make an order under subsection (3), the Federal Circuit Court must take into account the following: (a) the effect of subsection (1) and section 8A; (b) that detention of APASS applicants should only occur as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible time, and that there should be a general presumption against the detention; (c) whether there are any non-custodial measures available (for example the imposition of reporting obligations, sureties or other conditions); (d) the balancing of the rights to liberty, security and freedom of movement of the APASS applicant with the public policy initiatives of detention.
21	subsection (3), the court may also make any other order the court
22	considers appropriate to facilitate the APASS applicant not being
23	kept in immigration detention for longer than the extended, or
24	further extended, period.
25	27 Independent monitoring
26	 Immigration detention facilities must be subject to external
27	inspections every 6 months independent of the administration of
28	the facility.
29	(2) An inspection under subsection (1) must be conducted by an
30	independent organisation determined, by legislative instrument, by
31	the President of the Australian Human Rights Commission.

18

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1	(3) For the purposes of carrying out an inspection under
2	subsection (1), an organisation determined under subsection (2)
3	may:
4	(a) access all information on the numbers of detainees and
5	locations of detention, as well as all information relevant to
6	the treatment of detainees (including their records and
7	conditions of detention); and
8	(b) freely choose which immigration detention facilities to visit
9	(including by making unannounced visits at their own
10	initiative, and which detainees to interview); and
11	(c) conduct private and fully confidential interviews with
12	detainees and staff or contractors (including medical staff or
13	contractors) working at the immigration detention facility in
14	the course of their visits; and
15	(d) make recommendations to the immigration detention
16	facilities administration and other competent authorities.
17	(4) This section does not limit any other right or power of an
17	organisation or individual to access an immigration detention
18 19	facility that exists apart from this section.
17	facility that exists apart from this section.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

1 2

Part 4—Adverse security assessments

3	28 Advers	e security assessments
4 5 6	(1)	Despite paragraph 36(1)(b) of the <i>Australian Security Intelligence</i> <i>Organisation Act 1979</i> , Part IV of that Act applies to a security assessment in respect of an APASS applicant to Australia.
7 8 9	(2)	The functions of the IGIS include inquiring, on the IGIS's own initiative, into any adverse security assessments furnished in respect of an APASS applicant to Australia.
10 11 12	(3)	The IGIS may, despite any other law, communicate directly with an APASS applicant to Australia for the purposes of an inquiry referred to in subsection (2) in relation to the APASS applicant.
13 14 15 16	(4)	To avoid doubt, subsection (3) of this section does not limit the powers of the IGIS under subsection 17(2) of the <i>Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security Act 1986</i> in relation to an inquiry referred to in subsection (2) of this section.
17 18	(5)	Alternatives to detention that are appropriate in light of the specific security risk posed must be identified and considered.
19 20 21	(6)	Special consideration should be given to the wellbeing of the children or other dependents of any asylum seekers against whom an adverse security assessment is made.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

No. , 2018

Part 5—Review of decisions

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3	29 Review of decisions
4	Applications may be made to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal
5	for review of any of the following decisions:
6	(a) a decision of the Secretary under subsection 13(1) that an
7	APASS applicant to Australia will remain for processing at
8	the APASS centre where the APASS applicant was registered
9	as an asylum seeker;
10	(b) a decision of the Secretary under section 20 to revoke a
11	determination under subsection 17(1);
12	(c) a decision of the Secretary under section 20 to vary the
13	restriction specified in a determination under
14	subsection 17(1).

No. , 2018

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

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Part 6—Jurisdiction of courts

30 Jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court

4 Jurisdiction is conferred on the Federal Circuit Court in relation to 5 any civil matter arising under this Act.

Refugee Protection Bill 2018

No. , 2018

Part 7—Miscellaneous

3 31 Regulations

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	1 1	
The Governor-General	may make regula	tions prescribing matters:
	interior i o Barro	

- (a) required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed by the regulations; or
- (b) necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act.

No. , 2018

Refugee Protection Bill 2018