



Mr Alex Greenwich MP
Member for Sydney
Ground Floor, 21 Oxford Street
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010

Our Ref: S20/1

Dear Mr. Greenwich,

Thank you for your correspondence of 26 February 2020 to the Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Professor Jennifer Burn, regarding your concern that modern slavery is affecting refugees and asylum seekers living in NSW. I commend you for representing the needs of this vulnerable cohort, particularly during this difficult time.

In my role as NSW Coordinator General for Refugee Resettlement I have worked hard, together with Joseph La Posta, CEO of Multicultural NSW, to ensure that the needs of refugees and asylum seekers are at the forefront of the NSW Government's policy considerations. I am pleased to advise that on 3 June 2020 the NSW Government announced a package of more than \$6 million to support temporary visa holders, including asylum seekers and refugees, who have become increasingly vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic as they do not qualify for Commonwealth Government support. This funding is presently being distributed to specialist migrant and settlement non-government organisations to help them provide people with a range of necessities including food, medicine and housing and case coordination. People seeking asylum are also eligible for several programs and services funded by the NSW Government, including the Refugee Employment Support Program which supports refugees and asylum seekers by assisting their placement into meaningful employment.

Please be assured that the NSW Government continues to monitor the situation of people seeking asylum in NSW and is working hard to address the complex social and economic challenges facing all members of our community. I continue to work closely with my Commonwealth counterparts to escalate the issues outlined in your letter in addition to meeting regularly with the refugee and asylum seeker support sector at the Joint Partnership Working Group.

If you would like any further information, please contact Ms Donna Mosford, a/Director Policy, Settlement and Briefings at Multicultural NSW: donna.mosford@multicultural.nsw.gov.au. Thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to our attention.

Yours sincerely

Professor Peter Shergold
NSW Coordinator for Refugee Resettlement