

Independent Asylum Commission

CONDUCTING A NATIONWIDE REVIEW OF THE UK ASYLUM SYSTEM

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE **CITIZEN** ORGANISING FOUNDATION

DIARY NOTICE

03.05.07

CITIZENS' ASYLUM ENQUIRY TO HEAR EXPERIENCE OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN CARDIFF

A national citizens' enquiry will hear evidence on the treatment of vulnerable groups within the UK asylum system at a public hearing in Cardiff on May 22nd.

Event: **Independent Asylum Commission Public Hearing and Roadshow**

Date: **22nd May 2007 (Public hearing 14:30-17:30; Roadshow 18:45-20:30)**

Location: **Welsh Institute of Sport, Sophia Gardens, CARDIFF, CF11 9SW**

The Independent Asylum Commission is coming to Wales to collect evidence on the experiences of vulnerable asylum seekers for an impartial citizens' enquiry into the UK asylum system. The Commission will produce a report in 2008 that is expected to produce recommendations for reform of the asylum system that are fair as well as forceful, and realistic as well as humane.

The Cardiff hearing is the third of seven hearings across the UK. An august team of Commissioners, including peers, a former judge, a bishop, and human rights experts, will hear first hand testimony from a range of local people who are concerned about the impact of asylum on Cardiff's communities. The Commission will also focus on the experiences of those particularly vulnerable asylum seekers such as young people, disabled people, women, gay and lesbian asylum seekers, torture survivors, and victims of trafficking who have claimed asylum.

Jonathan Cox, Co-ordinator of the Independent Asylum Commission, said:

"Though asylum is one of the most contentious issues of our day, everyone we have met, from Cardiff to Caernarfon, can agree on one thing: the system is not working. When we come to Cardiff we will be focusing on vulnerable asylum seekers, but our

job is to listen to the views from people across the country from a wide range of perspectives, and then make recommendations for reform that can be adopted by those who run the asylum system.”

The Cardiff Public Hearing begins at 14:30 on 22nd May and the Roadshow – a promotional event for the Commission - begins at 18:45 on the same day.

For further details contact Jonathan Cox, Co-ordinator: 07919 484066.

Notes for editors:

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- The Independent Asylum Commission is conducting a nationwide review of the UK asylum system.
- The IAC is independent of government and the voluntary sector, and is accountable to citizens.
- Commissioners and the Commission’s Co-ordinator will be available for comment, as will some of those giving evidence. Journalists are welcome to attend either event. Please contact Jonathan Cox 07919 484066 or jonathan.cox@cof.org.uk to book a place in the media gallery or to arrange an interview.
- For information on the Commission’s earlier Public Hearings and Roadshows see the News and Media section at: www.independentasylumcommission.org.uk.
- For more information about the Commission contact chris@cof.org.uk or see www.independentasylumcommission.org.uk.