

1) How many people have been returned to Palestine since January 2004 and by what route were the majority of these people returned?

Between January 2004 and April 2005, 6 people have been returned to Palestine of which, 5 were Assisted Voluntary Returns (AVR) and the remaining one, a Non - Asylum Offender removed. IND was not able to provide travel arrangements of individual cases because of obligations under the Data Protection Act. However, IND did confirm that the return route to Palestine is made via Egypt.

Removals, voluntary departures (1), assisted returns of asylum applicants to Palestine (2)

	Principal applicants	Dependants	Total
Jan to Dec 2004 (P)	*	5	5
Jan to March 2005 (P)	*	-	*

(1) Includes enforced removals, persons departing 'voluntarily' following enforcement action initiated against them, and persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration

(2) Figures rounded to the nearest 5, with. = 1 or 2, and may not sum due to rounding

(P) Provisional management information only.

2) Does the government monitor what happens to Asylum seekers who have been refused leave to remain in the United Kingdom when they are returned to their country of origin?

This information is already available in the public domain. However for ease of reference, the relevant information is included below:

20 Dec 2004 : Column WA122

Asylum Seekers: Deportation from UK

Lord Dholakia asked Her Majesty's Government:

What steps are being taken to ensure that asylum seekers who are deported from the United Kingdom to their country of origin are not ill treated. **(HL50)**

The Minister of State. Home Office (Baroness Scotland of Asthal):

Each asylum claim is considered on its own merits taking account of relevant country information, case-law and factors specific to the individual claim. Where a decision has been taken that an individual would not be at risk if returned to their country and that decision has been upheld by the appellate authorities we consider that it is safe for that individual to be removed.

We do not consider it necessary to monitor the treatment of failed asylum seekers who have been removed in accordance with the proper procedures. However, any reliable information about the treatment of returned asylum seekers in a particular country will be referred to in the appropriate country information materials produced by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate and will therefore form part of the individual assessment of asylum claims made by nationals of that country.

3) If the answer is yes. How many, to the Government's knowledge, were able to return to Palestinian controlled areas of the Gaze strip and West Bank without hindrance from the Israeli authorities?

Please refer to the above statement.

4) If the answer is no, has the Government simply not considered this practice or has it chosen not to. If the latter is the case, on what grounds has it chosen not to?

Please refer to the above statement.