



Short Biographical Notes

Mr. Richard Towle

Regional Representative to Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and the Pacific

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



Mr. Richard Towle is the Regional Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and 13 independent Pacific Island States. The UNHCR office in Canberra has an oversight role: to safeguard the rights and wellbeing of refugees in the region and to assist regional governments to find durable solutions in relation to the plight of refugees.

Mr Towle has worked for the UNHCR since 1990, in a variety of capacities around the world. Prior to assuming his responsibilities as Regional Representative in early 2007, Mr. Towle was Special Advisor in the Department of International Protection, at the UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva. He previously also worked as Chief of Mission with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the former Yugoslavia, between 2001 and 2003.

Mr Towle has also held a variety of senior positions dealing with refugee issues outside of the United Nations system, in Hong Kong as well as in his home country of New Zealand, where he was in legal practice.