

A spokeswoman for Immigration Minister Scott Morrison said:

“Claims that the Minister was ‘evacuated’ or had ‘increased tensions’ are false. They have no basis in fact.

“The government inherited a facility on Manus Island that had been rushed by the previous government.

“The resettlement arrangements were a complete blank page. There was no post assessment accommodation in place or in planning. The centre was funded to take just one in six illegal boat arrivals. Infrastructure and security were both poorly planned and deficient.

“The Government has been working to fix offshore processing and the resettlement arrangements since we came to office.

“The Government immediately instructed that a security assessment for the site be conducted that put new security measures in place, with more to be done. 100 additional ex-pat security officers were sent to Manus Island before the incident occurred.

“The Government filled the \$1.2 billion black hole on offshore processing from Labor who had left offshore processing facilities underfunded, ill equipped and under capacity.

“The Government has appointed new contractors – Transfield Services – across both offshore processing centres. The previous security contractor G4S and service provider The Salvation Army are no longer involved in the running of the facilities.

“Any and all events that are considered by Mr Cornall to have been relevant to the incident that occurred at Manus Island on the night of February 17 will be addressed in his independent review.

“It is appropriate that the investigations into this incident, including Mr Cornall’s review, are allowed to take their course to get to the bottom of what occurred.”