



BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS 3 November 2015

In our latest bulletin you can discover how you can add your voice to our advice to government through our annual consultations, read about our support for doctors and health workers standing up to get kids out of detention, find out about our upcoming AGM and the events surrounding it in Perth and discover how Australia's immigration policies are keeping citizenship out of the realm of eligible refugees. Also, if you are in Sydney, be sure to check out our exhibition from the 22-29 November, where we will be launching our inaugural calendar filled with the brilliant art work of Australia's pre-eminent political cartoonists.

RCOA always encourages you to submit events, opportunities and your own policy suggestions to admin@refugeecouncil.org.au. *Thanks for your ongoing support.*

Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia

NEWS FROM THE REFUGEE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

Refugee Council of Australia 2016 Calendar Exhibition & Launch

...IT'S NO LAUGHING MATTER
Featuring Australia's top political cartoonists

Launch • 25 - 11 - 15 • 6:30 PM

16 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale

Refugee Council of Australia THE COPNER
RSVP: admin@refugeecouncil.org.au Exhibition runs from 22 November - 29 November, 2015 PYSON

The poster features a dark blue background with a green, wavy, abstract shape on the right side. A small boat is visible in the lower left corner. The text is white and black, providing details about the calendar exhibition and launch event.

...it's no laughing matter: RCOA Exhibition and 2016 Calendar launch

Australia's pre-eminent political cartoonists have donated their works of art on refugees and asylum seekers to feature in the inaugural RCOA calendar. We will be launching the calendar and having a thank you to all those who have supported us through the recent year. Artworks will be available for auction and a raffle. Please come along and celebrate the victories, whilst remembering the many challenges we will continue to work together to overcome.

Corner Collective, 116 Abercrombie Street, Chippendale. **Launch and celebration: 6.30pm, 25 November 6pm. Exhibition runs from 22 November – 29 November** RSVP: admin@refugeecouncil.org.au

RCOA rejects Ex-PM's lecture to Europe on approach to refugees

"Love thy neighbour" a key principle of the catholic church was called into question by Ex-PM Tony Abbott in his much criticised Margaret Thatcher lecture. RCOA President Phil Glendenning was quick out of the blocks in response: "In terms of what Mr Abbott's proposing in Europe, it would be an utter catastrophe if people fleeing from persecution were told to go back there, were pushed back to sea where they would likely drown," Mr Glendenning told ABC News Breakfast.

RCOA 2015 AGM, MEMBERS FORUM + PUBLIC FORUM: Perth WA 16-17 November

From 3.30pm Monday 16 November 2015, the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) will hold our Annual General Meeting, Members' Forum and Public Forum.

AGM Featuring reports of RCOA's activities in 2014-15, elections for members of the RCOA Board and opportunities for members to present resolutions. **Perth Activist Centre, 15/5 Aberdeen St, Perth (next to Mclver station).**

Members' Forum: 4.00pm-5.00pm: An opportunity for RCOA members and supporters to share their ideas with the RCOA Board about options for improving the effectiveness of national advocacy and community education on refugee and asylum seeker issues. **Perth Activist Centre, 15/5 Aberdeen St, Perth (next to Mclver station).**

Public Forum: 6.00pm for 6.30pm-8.00pm *"More than an Australian Solution: engaging with Asia on refugee rights"* As billions of Australian taxpayer dollars are spent on deterring people seeking asylum, the Asia Pacific region is struggling to deal with the needs of 3.9 million refugees. This forum will explore the implications of Australian policy in the Asia-Pacific region. The forum will be facilitated by Dr Caroline Fleay and the three panellists will be:

- Paul Power, Chief Executive Officer of the Refugee Council of Australia and Board Member of the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network.
- Sunili Govinnage, Human rights lawyer, The Humanitarian Group, previously spent seven years as a writer, editor and researcher in Indonesia.
- Ashraf Mohammad, arrived in Australia three years ago having travelled through Indonesia as he sought asylum.

The Public Forum will be held at the **State Library of Western Australia, 25 Francis Street Perth Cultural Centre, Perth**

see http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/about_us/access_to_the_building

Please RSVP for the AGM, Members' Forum and/or Public Forum by email to admin@refugeecouncil.org.au or by phone: (02) 9211 9333.

Have your say on Australia's Refugee & Humanitarian Program

RCOA is currently conducting consultations across the country on the future of Australia's Refugee & Humanitarian Program. This is an important opportunity to share your views about Australia's refugee policies. We are seeking feedback, suggestions and concerns from refugee communities and individuals and organisations working with these communities.

The consultations will focus on Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program, post-arrival settlement support and Australia's policies towards asylum seekers. For further information and to find details of consultations in your area, click [here](#).

Refugee Council applauds doctors and health workers leadership on #KidsOut

The Refugee Council of Australia has welcomed the action by doctors and health workers across the country who have chosen to stand together and [demand an end to children in immigration detention](#).

TAKE ACTION

Write To Be Heard: : 30,000 people are relying on it

After more than a year of delays, the Australian Government has finally started processing the claims of the 30,000 people who arrived by boat to seek asylum since 2012 and still have not had a chance to apply for protection. At last, they will have an opportunity to put forward their case for why they need Australia's protection.

But new laws have made the process of applying for protection much more complicated. People seeking asylum are now expected to take on more of the responsibility for putting forward their claims and there are new rules which will make it far more difficult for people to secure protection in Australia, even if they have genuine and compelling claims. Find out what you can do here: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/news-2/writetobeheard/>

LATEST RESEARCH AND POLICY FROM RCOA

Citizenship discrimination for refugees who arrive by boat: NEW RCOA research

New research from the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) raises serious questions about discrimination in access to citizenship for refugees who arrived by boat in Australia seeking protection. The research, [Delays in Citizenship Applications for Permanent Refugee Visa Holders](#), is based on 188 interviews with people of refugee background who are eligible for citizenship after being in Australia for four years on a permanent humanitarian visa but have experienced considerable delays in the citizenship process.

Community Support Program (CSP)

RCOA welcomes a private or community sponsorship program replacement, and the replacement of Community Proposal Pilot (CPP) with strict caveats, including that places provided through the program be additional to the current intake of 13,570 places. You can [read the full submission here](#) and our [media response here](#).

Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015.

For refugee and humanitarian entrants (particularly those who are stateless), Australian citizenship often has special significance, representing the culmination of their journey and

the end of displacement. RCOA is therefore concerned that the measures proposed in this Bill are likely to undermine the values and principles of citizenship. In particular, we are concerned that the Bill will allow citizenship and its associated rights to be revoked without due process, and may increase the risk of both refoulement and indefinite detention for people from refugee backgrounds. We therefore recommend that the Bill be rejected in its entirety, and that the Australian Government consider adopting measures to increase social. You can see the [full submission here](#).

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The best way to keep up with RCOA is through Facebook and Twitter. We regularly publish links to new RCOA statements and research and to interesting articles in the media on refugee issues. [Our Facebook page is here](#) Our Twitter handle is @OzRefugeeCounc

NEW RESEARCH, STATEMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

By Hook or by Crook: Australia's abuse of asylum seekers at sea

Amnesty International's latest report dominated the headlines upon its release, reminding Australia and the world of the brutal treatment meted out by the Australian Government's policies and calling for a Royal Commission into Australia's treatment of asylum seekers. [See the full report here](#)

Fact Sheet Australia's response to the Syrian and Iraqi crisis

THE Department of Immigration and Border Protection has issued a new fact sheet on Australia's approach to resettling the 12,000 Syrian and Iraqis. You can read it [here](#)

Alternatives to detention: IDC

With the ongoing harm emanating from Australia's detention centres, it's worth revisiting this excellent publication from the International Detention Coalition which examines 250

alternatives to detention from 60 countries. <http://idcoalition.org/issues/alternatives-to-detention/>

Parenting in a New Culture early intervention and prevention program Developed by Spectrum MRC provides culturally sensitive parenting education through facilitated workshops and downloadable family resources, supported by professional instruction materials. New resources have been developed to build the capacity of the community services sector in response to increasing demand for specialist family intervention and parenting support in refugee and migrant communities in metropolitan Melbourne and can be accessed at <http://www.parentinginaculture.org.au>.

OPPORTUNITIES

Click [here for employment opportunities](#), and [here for volunteering opportunities](#). With the Refugee Council of Australia

Join the MYAN Australia Youth Advisory Group

If You are aged 18 to 25 years old; from a refugee or migrant background (including Australian-born to a migrant parent); interested in social issues affecting refugee and migrant young people; passionate about leading positive change for migrant and refugee young people; able to attend the first MYAN Youth Advisory Group meeting in Melbourne on December 1st - 3rd? If so, MYAN wants to hear from you. [Find out more:](#)

Home and Art - exhibition and prize

Home and Art has been developed to provide an opportunity for asylum seeker and refugee artists to represent the dreams, memories and aspirations that make up the refugee experience. It proposes to present works by refugee artists in order to celebrate the important contribution that refugees are making to the cultural and social fabric of Victoria and beyond. One cash prize for an artist who lives in Australia, and one for an artist living in the City of Greater Dandenong will be made. A further prize is available, offering an Artist in Residency studio space in Dandenong for three months. [Download application form \(PDF - 710KB\)](#)

Dandenong Interfaith Network seeking volunteer tour guides People of asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds are encouraged to apply for tour guide roles and learn about other religions, meet new people and visit wonderful spiritual sites. For more information contact Helen Heath tour@interfaithnetwork.org.au or 0418 571 483

Multicultural NSW send in your achievement and celebrate success Any organisation, private, public or non government can send highlights of their work, website showcases, key achievements and celebrations that showcase the many achievements, large and small, which contribute to multicultural harmony and cohesion in NSW. For more information click [here:](#)

Tabaadul Exchange Program

Are you a student at Sydney University who wants to improve your Arabic? Contact Dr Lucia Sorbera lucia.sorbera@sydney.edu.au Miss Nesrine Basheer nesrine.basheer@sydney.edu.au for more information.

REFUGEE ISSUES IN THE MEDIA

A brief overview of the many issues facing refugees and people seeking asylum covered in the media

Australian News

[Buying silence: Immigration asked charities for multimillion dollar bond.](#) Fairfax

[The Death of Khodayar Amini](#) The Saturday paper

[New legislation could force people seeking asylum into warzones](#) ABC TV

[Syrian returned to his homeland, injured in attack](#) ABC Lateline

[Border Force were to conduct on the spot inspections in failed Melbourne operation](#) The Age

[The Two Australian Girls and their mother living in immigration detention](#) Fairfax

[Kyrgyzstan reported as option for Australian refugee resettlement](#) The Guardian

[Healthcare workers around Australia protest against Kids in Detention](#) The Guardian

Nauru and Manus

[Powerful video calls on the Australian government to end its 'war' on refugee women](#) – Daily Life

[Australia ignored three requests from Nauru to move Abyan](#) The Guardian

[Chris Kenny visits Nauru: borders open allies](#) The Saturday Paper

[Detention centre manager sparks raid on Save the Children](#) The Guardian

['Lawless' PNG to begin resettling asylum seekers](#) Reuters

[This is Abyan's story, and it is Australia's story](#) The Guardian

[Up to 100 people seeking asylum on Manus struck by food poisoning](#) The Guardian

International

[This was never supposed to happen again](#) The Sunday Times/The Australian

[Migration to Europe explained in Graphics](#) BBC

[Powerful Gestures](#) The New Yorker

[Ten Borders: One refugees epic escape from Syria](#) The New Yorker

[Record 218,000 asylum seekers crossed Mediterranean in October, United Nations](#) – ABC

Refugees Contribute

[Afghan refugee now doctor tells modern day success story](#) Brisbane Times

[National day of unity as public stands up for refugees and people seeking asylum](#) SMH

[Five times 'Walk Together' restored our faith in Australia](#) – Daily Life

UNHCR

[New camp opened for IDPs in Anbar. Iraq](#)

[11,000 families affected by flooding in Algeria](#)

[Ongoing conflict in Burma traps civilians in crossfire](#)

[UNHCR targets winter relief operations for refugees](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Settlement Council of Australia Triennial conference 5-7 May 2016

Settlement and Citizenship in civil society is the theme of the conference where international and Australian leaders and thinkers will share the experience of effective

settlement. To be held at Zinc, Federation Square, Melbourne Australia, [more information here](#)

AYSA at SA Multicultural Festival

November 1, 11:00 am - 5:00 pm [Rundle Mall](#), Adelaide, SA.

Lutheran Community Care and Afghan Youth of SA (AYSA) will participate this year Multicultural Festival. AYSA will have an art and cultural stall as well as a Martial Arts demonstration at this festival. [Find out more »](#)

Inside the Syrian Refugee Crisis

November 2, 6 - 8:00 pm [NSW Teachers' Federation Building](#), 23-33 Mary St Surry Hills, 2010

Domenique Sherab (ARRD Legal Aid in Jordan working with refugees, via Skype) will share her direct experience working with Syrian refugees who are fleeing with their lives. [Find out more »](#)

Refugee Rights Action Network Perth

November 2 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm [the activist centre](#), 15/5 Aberdeen St, Northbridge, WA6000Australia

Refugee Rights Action Network (RRAN) is a political activist group. We oppose mandatory detention and believe that asylum seekers should be welcomed into the community. [Find out more »](#)

Bring Your Bills Day

November 6 @ 10:00 am - 3:00 pm [Brunswick Uniting Church Hall](#), 214 Sydney Rd Brunswick, VIC Australia

Lentara UnitingCare Financial Counselling Services is hosting a Bring Your Bills Day on 6 November in Moorland to help people get on top of their utility bills. [Find out more »](#)

Freo Refugee Rights Action Network Meetings

November 6 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm [Fremantle Town Hall](#), 8 William St Fremantle, WA

Refugee Rights Action Network (RRAN) is a political activist group. We oppose mandatory detention and believe that asylum seekers should be welcomed into the community. [Find out more »](#)

Leadership and Advocacy Training for Young Women Leaders from Refugee Backgrounds

November 7 @ 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

[Hazara Women of Australia](#), 1/130 Merrylands Road Merrylands, NSW

On the occasion of its AGM, ANCORW (Australian National Committee on Refugee Women) warmly invites young women from refugee backgrounds to join us for a Leadership and Advocacy training session for young women leaders followed by ANCORW AGM. [Find out more »](#)

Australian Refugee Association 40th Anniversary Celebration Dinner

November 7 @ 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm [Tenth & Gibson](#), 87 Gibson Street Bowden, SA5007Australia

You are invited to join us on an expedition of the first forty years of Australian Refugee Association, with a culinary journey through the departure countries of Australia's arrivals. [Find out more »](#)

Harmony Walk 2015

November 8 @ 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm [Francis Park](#), Richmond Road, Blacktown, NSW Australia

On Sunday 8 November 2015, Sydney will host the 4th annual Harmony Walk – a celebration of Australia's national, ethnic and religious diversity. It brings together people from all walks of life who strive for an inclusive society. [Find out more »](#)

Billibellary's Walk & Celebration

November 9 @ 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm [Melbourne Law School, G08](#), 185 Pelham Street Carlton, VIC Australia

The University of Melbourne invites asylum seekers in our community to attend a lecture series. During September and October we will host lectures on important issues in modern and historical Australia, including education, human rights, equality, health and Indigenous cultures....[Find out more »](#)

Unionists for Refugees meeting

November 10 @ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Level 6, 445 Hay Street, Perth, WA.

A group of unionists in Perth are building a network to campaign for a humanitarian and welcoming refugee policy. Interested union members or supporters are invited to meet on the second Tuesday of every month. [Find out more »](#)

My choice, My Life

November 12 @ 9:30 am - 2:30 pm [Swinburne University of Technology Croydon Campus](#), 12-50 Norton Road, Croydon, VIC

Empowering migrant and refugee youth through educational pathways for a better future. The day includes: How service providers can help you Workshops on topics such as leadership, your rights and how to succeed A hip hop performance and much more [Find out more »](#)

Narratives, Images, Queers and Asylum Seekers: What do Australia's stories tell us?

November 13 @ 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm [University of South Australia](#), Yungondi Way, City West, SA

Presented by the Remembering Dunstan Project and to be delivered by Professor Nan Seuffert – Director, Legal Intersections Research Centre, University of Wollongong. Activist, advocate, scholar, Nan Seuffert, has researched, taught and published on law and LGBTI issues. [Find out more »](#)

Welcoming the Stranger

November 15 @ 3:30 pm - 8:00 pm [Bennetts Lane](#), 25 Bennetts Lane Melbourne, VIC Some of Melbourne's finest Jazz musicians have united in support of the world's refugees & asylum seekers. Playing to the theme of "Welcoming the Stranger" musicians will perform solo & duo dedications to the hope, strength and plight of those...[Find out more »](#)

Researchers for Asylum Seekers (RAS) Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference

November 16 @ 9:00 am - 5:00 pm [Gryphon Gallery](#)

Conference Themes SEEKING ASYLUM IS A HUMAN RIGHT CHILD REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS ATTITUDES OF HOST NATIONS TO ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES Abstract submissions are invited for the annual Researchers for Asylum Seekers (RAS) Conference. [Find out more »](#)

Multicultural Sexual Health Network Forum

November 17 @ 9:00 am - 1:00 pm [Multicultural Hub](#), 506 Elizabeth Street Melbourne, VIC

This forum will examine the complexities of domestic violence, especially for women from refugee and migrant backgrounds and explore links between domestic violence and negative sexual health outcomes. [Find out more »](#)

Living Library: "People Just Like Us" Talk V. Tamils from Sri Lanka & Syrians

November 18 @ 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm [Parramatta City Council Chambers](#), 1A Civic Place Parramatta,

In order to change this negative perception of asylum seekers and refugees, as well as the inhumane policies, "People Just Like Us", partnering with Refugee Council of Australia, will hold a series of talks in which we invite refugees to share their experience. [Find out more »](#)

He Named Me Malala

November 18 6:00 - 9:00 pm [Dendy Cinemas](#), Opera Quays, 9/2 East Circular Quay Please join us for a Christmas celebration featuring the inspirational movie He Named Me Malala. This documentary traces the life, story and personal journey of human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Malala Yousafzai. [Find out more »](#)

The Pacific Solution: What can we learn from the case of Behrouz Boochani?"

November 18, 2015, 6.30 – 8.00 p.m Theatre B117, Melbourne School of Design, Melbourne Uni. Free public Lecture from the Melbourne Refugee Studies Program University Location: <https://msd.unimelb.edu.au/contact-us> Admission is free and seating will be limited Booking is essential [Book now here:](#)

Australia's National Interest and the Decent Treatment of Asylum Seekers

November 22 @ 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm Christ Church Grammar School Chapel Claremont, Queenslea Drive Claremont, WA
A talk by Father Frank Brennan SJ [Find out more »](#)

People Just Like Us Talk III Iranian & South Sudanese

November 24 @ 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm, Reginald Murphy Community Centre, 19 Greenknowe Avenue, Potts Point , In order to change this negative perception of asylum seekers and refugees, as well as the inhumane policies, "People Just Like Us", partnering with Refugee Council of Australia, will hold a series of talks in which we invite refugees to share their experience. [Find out more »](#)

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