



Refugee Council
of Australia

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Bulletin

21 July 2016



Off to court we go for access to citizenship

After our [recent report](#) and ensuing contact from hundreds more people of refugee backgrounds facing significant delays when applying for Australian citizenship - despite having passed all legal requirements - we have now assisted in taking this matter to the Federal Court. Having exhausted all other avenues we are now working with two applicants and a legal team in an attempt to get a fair outcome for thousands of people.

Find out the [background of the case](#) and how people denied access to citizenship are suffering psychological trauma and being stopped from reuniting with their families. The case resumes on the 28 July. Stay tuned for updates.

Photo above courtesy ABC Lateline

[Read our Statement on the case and watch the ABC Lateline story](#)

- BREAKING NEWS - BREAKING NEWS -BREAKING NEWS -



YES! Thanks to YOU subsidised TAFE courses are now available for Onshore Protection Visa Holders

Great news has just arrived today. Thanks to you, and the advocacy of many organisations and individuals, NSW and South Australia have recently announced they are extending TAFE subsidies for people on protection visas, temporary protection visas and SHEVs. RCOA delivered the [Barriers to Education](#) in December last year and have been working tirelessly to bring this matter to the attention of decision makers. We've made real progress, but there is much more to do, so let's keep up the pressure.

For more information on courses available in NSW, see [here](#). The South Australian Government is set to announce the details in coming days.

Add your voice for access to education for people seeking asylum



The 45th Australian Parliament

With counting still ongoing in the 2016 Federal election, we know the Turnbull Government has reclaimed power via a thin majority, and a panoply of independents and minor parties are preparing to make their way to the Senate crossbench to claim the balance of power.

One thing appears certain: the issues surrounding refugees and people seeking asylum are set to continue to dominate public conversation. We are in the process of contacting all members and senators, welcoming them to the new parliament and offering a briefing on solutions to the critical issues they face including improving the refugee resettlement program, resolving the crises in detention, particularly offshore detention, and ensuring a fair refugee determination process and a welcoming environment for refugees and people seeking asylum.

Peter Dutton has been returned as the Immigration Minister and Christian Porter as the Minister for Social Services responsible for resettlement once refugees arrive. They will be assisted by Alex Hawke, Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection, and Senator Zed Seselja, the new Assistant Minister for Social Services and Multicultural Affairs. We look forward to a building a constructive relationship with each of them to secure better outcomes for refugees and people seeking asylum, thereby benefiting the whole community.



Growing Victoria's capacity to understand refugees

Aspiring refugee presenters from the Congo, Iraq, Iran, and Oromo communities attended a two-day training course in Melbourne on 15 and 16 July. Joining with seven Community Educators, the training prepares participants to co-present RCOA's [Face to Face](#) program in schools and to community groups. Face to Face is the RCOA program where refugee presenters tell the story of their journey to Australia and Community Educators work with them to give the context to the refugee experience and refugee settlement. The Face to Face program has been delivered in Melbourne and Sydney schools since 2014 and is funded by RCOA.

As one refugee presenter said "Our investment in this program matters. If we invest today timely and properly, we will achieve great fruits in the future"

[Schools - Sign up for Face to Face learning with refugees](#)



6th Annual Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR6)

20 – 22 September 2016. Bangkok, Thailand.

Australian NGOs are invited to join the 6th Annual Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights (APCRR6), a biennial forum for refugee rights practitioners hosted and coordinated by the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN). APCRR is an excellent opportunity to connect and network with NGOs from across the region, and to meet APRRN's members from more than 20 countries working on refugee rights. This year APCRR6 participants will be offered a plethora of workshops that will run over the course of the first two days. These workshops will cover a variety of topics including *media and xenophobia*, *resettlement*, *Rohingya* and *youth*. Whilst non – members are welcome to participate, [APRRN membership](#) is free of charge and provides access to this growing, diverse and vibrant network! To attend APCRR6, please complete the [application form](#). Applications for non-funded participants are open until July 25.

Photo above: Michelle Ferns

ZEUS | WESTFIELD SYDNEY



ZEUS FREE FEED



Thanks to Zeus Street Greek for their excellent support when opening their new store in Westfield Sydney. Reflecting the generosity and compassion of the Greek people in welcoming Syrian refugees, Zeus offered to both donate food to their customers and the costs of that food to the Refugee Council.

Thanks Zeus Street Greek for your generosity.

REFUGEE & HUMANITARIAN SCHOLARSHIP

The University of Adelaide is introducing *The Adelaide Refugee & Humanitarian Scholarship* from semester 2, 2016 in recognition of the financial hardships faced by students from a refugee background. Holders of Bridging Visas E (BVE), Temporary Protection Visas (subclass 785) or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV) who have not previously undertaken any university study in Australia will be eligible to apply.

The Scholarship entails a 100% tuition fee scholarship as well as \$2500 per annum for the duration of study, up to a maximum of four years. **Applications for the scholarship close at 5pm on the 25th of July 2016.** [More information available here.](#)

[More information](#)

HAVE YOUR SAY: COMMUNITY PILOT PROPOSAL

RCOA invites service providers and other members to a teleconference consultation on Australia's Community Proposal Pilot and its comparison to Canada's private sponsorship program. The teleconference will take place on Monday 1 August at 1pm AEST (12:30pm Adelaide, Darwin, 11am Perth). To register, please RSVP at <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/ourwork/cpp-consultation/>

[More information](#)

EVENTS



[Exiled to Nowhere: Burma's Rohingya](#) Exiled To Nowhere shares the stories and plight of a people who right now have no-where to go and illustrates their courage to stay alive whatever the ground beneath their feet. Customs House, Sydney. Runs till 2 October.

[Castan Centre Annual Human Rights Conference](#) - Join over 300 attendees from the law, civil society, academia and business at Australia's only annual human rights conference. Limited student rate tickets are limited. Federation Square, Melbourne, 22 July.

For a full list of events see coming up across Australia and in your areas, see our calendar [here](#).

REPORTS AND SUBMISSIONS

- **Updated:** [Recent Changes in Australian refugee policy](#) This document summarises some of the more recent policy changes in this dynamic policy environment.
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- **Submission to the Victorian Government on the [State Disability Plan](#).** This submission focuses on the experiences of people from refugee backgrounds who arrived in Victoria with a disability, particularly in relation to access to appropriate equipment, services and support. It also highlights the issues humanitarian entrants face in accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

RCOA SERVICE DIRECTORY UPDATE

RCOA has recently updated our services directory. Thank you to our volunteers and ASRC for your help and you can see the updated directory. You can find information on the services available for people from refugee backgrounds and people seeking asylum [here](#)

MEDIA

National

- [The politics of foreigners, fear and envy](#)
- [Obama is hosting a refugee summit, but Australia may not be invited](#)
- [Refugee Artists show the rewards of humanity](#)
- [Hazaras take Immigration Minister to court over citizenship delays](#)
- [Divisive Hanson comments 'divisive and unsubstantiated' say RCOA](#)
- [Ajak Kwai: Cows, Women and War](#)
- [New website launched to fact check One Nation](#)

Regional

- [No Nauru visa for SBS journalist](#)
 - [Re-elected Nauruan Government slams Australia's media 'Bias'](#)
 - [The terrible true story of Eaten Fish](#)
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International

- [Pakistan will not forcibly return Afghans: Baloch](#)
 - [After Brexit immigrant attacks soar](#)
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