



# Refugee Council of Australia

## **BULLETIN FOR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS**

**19 July 2013**

Welcome to the latest bulletin from the Refugee Council of Australia. We welcome feedback, ideas or information worth sharing. Please contact us at [admin@refugeecouncil.org.au](mailto:admin@refugeecouncil.org.au).

*Paul Power, CEO, Refugee Council of Australia*

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## **NEWS FROM THE REFUGEE COUNCIL**

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### **More than 200 events highlight Refugee Week celebrations**

Australia celebrated the rich contributions of humanitarian arrivals at more than 200 events during Refugee Week. Under the “Restoring Hope” theme, events included breakfasts, soccer tournaments, art exhibitions, film festivals and book launches, culminating in the Welcome to Australia Walk Together event in 15 Australian cities and towns. RCOA coordinated Refugee Week launches in Sydney (in partnership with STARTTS) and in Geelong (in partnership with Diversitat). Guest speakers at the Sydney launch included Baulkham Hills Ladies Troupe star Yarrrie Bangura and RCOA President Phil Glendenning. Phil’s speech is at: [http://refugeecouncil.org.au/r/spch/130615\\_RestoringHope.pdf](http://refugeecouncil.org.au/r/spch/130615_RestoringHope.pdf). The Sydney launch also featured the Dario Palermo Refugee Art Exhibition, presentation of 2013 Refugee Humanitarian Awards, a screening of the Australian Refugee Film Festival and entertainment. The Victorian launch was hosted by Diversitat and held at the Northern Community Hub in Norlane, Geelong. The celebration included speeches from Victorian MP Andrew Katos, Geelong councillor Dr Srechko Kontelj, Geelong resident Tereza Gum and RCOA board member Dr Melika Sheikh-Eldin as well as food, singing, dancing and drumming. The inaugural Refugee Champion Awards were presented to Ali Khan Ahamadi and Hemraz Bhoolah. Our Refugee Week ambassadors were also busy, speaking at events and appearing in a number of media interviews to promote Refugee Week.

### **Tougher asylum policies not the answer**

RCOA expressed its disappointment at comments by Foreign Minister Bob Carr who questioned the claims of asylum seekers arriving by boat and foreshadowed a “tougher, more hard-edged assessment” of claims under the new Kevin Rudd-led government. In a statement, RCOA President Phil Glendenning advised the Government to uphold its commitment to a robust refugee status determination system and warned of the consequences of a tougher approach. While RCOA accepted the return of people who did not have grounds for protection, denying the right of asylum seekers with well-founded fears of persecution to properly outline their protection claims had serious and grave implications. “The quality of decision-making in assessing refugee applications is essential and decisions can be a matter of life or death. If asylum seekers are returned to their country of origin on the basis of a poor decision, they may die, and they have.” See: [http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130627\\_RSD.pdf](http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130627_RSD.pdf)

### **Ditching the Refugee Convention against Australia’s national interest**

Following comments made by former Immigration Minister Gerry Hand who said Australia should rethink its commitment to the Refugee Convention, RCOA cautioned that such a move was counter-productive to efforts to encourage more countries in the Asia-Pacific region to take steps to protect refugees. In a statement, RCOA President Phil Glendenning said it was in Australia’s national interest to see Refugee Convention rules respected in a region that had poor levels of refugee protection. If Australia abandoned its commitment to the Refugee Convention, it would send a most negative message to those countries in Asia that fail to offer adequate protection to refugees.” Read the statement here: [http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130617\\_Convention.pdf](http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130617_Convention.pdf)

### **International praise for Australia’s resettlement program**

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The Refugee Council of Australia represents  
non-government organisations and  
individuals working with and for refugees  
in Australia and around the world

Australia's efforts to double its Refugee and Humanitarian Program have been praised at the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) in Geneva. In a statement, RCOA CEO Paul Power, who attended the meeting, said the praise for staff of Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was deserved. He said the expansion of the program from 6,000 to 12,000 places in 2012-13 was noted by consultation participants as the most significant global achievement in refugee resettlement in the past year.

"While RCOA has rightly expressed deep concern about many recent national policy changes which have stripped away important protections for people seeking asylum, we agree that the successful doubling of the government-UNHCR resettlement program deserves recognition as a significant humanitarian contribution," he said. Read more here: [http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130703\\_ATCR.pdf](http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130703_ATCR.pdf)

### **690,000 refugees in need of resettlement in 2014, UNHCR says**

UNHCR has identified 690,000 refugees in need of resettlement in 2014, despite having access to only 86,000 global resettlement places each year. UNHCR released its Global Resettlement Needs analysis for 2014 as government and NGO representatives from 29 resettlement countries joined staff of UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration in Geneva this month for the 2013 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR). The Australian NGO movement was represented by Paul Power of RCOA, Dr Melika Sheikh-Eldin (AMES Victoria and RCOA Board) and Cedric Manen (chairperson of Settlement Council of Australia), with Alfred Kamara, a former refugee from Liberia who works with Access Community Services in Queensland, being Australia's designated refugee representative. While the refugee crisis in the region surrounding Syria was a dominant theme in the ATCR meeting, delegates discussed ways of improving access to resettlement for particular refugee populations, including those from Afghanistan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Colombia. Discussion also focused on separated children, women and girls at risk, gay and lesbian refugees, mental health issues and refugees' access to employment. RCOA's report on the ATCR meeting, which includes links to key meeting documents, is at <http://refugeecouncil.org.au/r/urpt/ATCR%202013%20report.pdf>

### **Refugee representatives lead Australian advocacy at UNHCR NGO consultations**

Former refugees from five countries of origin played the leading role in Australian advocacy efforts coordinated by RCOA and the Centre for Refugee Research (University of NSW) at last month's UNHCR NGO Consultations in Geneva. Abdul Karim Hekmat (a former refugee of Afghan background), Joseph Youhana (Iraqi), Parsuram Sharma-Luitai (Bhutanese), Feduma Geddi (Somali) and Munira Mahmoud (Sudanese) joined RCOA CEO Paul Power and representatives of nine other Australian NGOs for the three-day gathering in Geneva (11-13 June). In addition to using the formal gatherings to raise issues of concern to refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people from Asia, the Middle East and Africa, the refugee representatives led discussions in the Australian delegation's meetings with the directors and senior staff of UNHCR's Division of International Protection, Resettlement Service and regional bureaux. RCOA will release a report on the meetings in coming weeks.

### **Middle East lesson in generosity towards refugees from Syria**

While attending UNHCR NGO consultations in Geneva, RCOA drew attention to the response of Middle Eastern communities responding to the increasing number of refugees displaced by conflict in Syria. RCOA CEO Paul Power said the generosity of the people of Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt in responding to the outflow of more than two million refugees from Syria was a lesson in hospitality to Australia and the world. The UNHCR NGO consultations heard that the flow of refugees from Syria to neighbouring countries was continuing at 200,000 per month or 7,000 per day. In a statement, RCOA said: "The generosity of the nations of the Middle East is extraordinary and deserves greater international attention." Read the statement here: <http://refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130613-MiddleEast.pdf>

### **Australia not most generous country to refugees – but in top 25**

Australia is not the world's most generous country in its response to refugees but is just inside the top 25, according to an analysis of the latest global statistics by RCOA. Responding to political claims and media reports that Australia takes more refugees per capita than any other nation in the world, RCOA CEO Paul Power said his organisation's analysis of the 2012 statistics from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) showed Australia was 22<sup>nd</sup> on a per capita basis in 2012 and 24<sup>th</sup> over the past decade. The media release and tables of the latest international statistics on refugee

needs is at [http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130719\\_GlobalStats.pdf](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/n/mr/130719_GlobalStats.pdf) The analysis is based on UNHCR's 2012 Global Trends

### **Concerns remain over human rights for Rohingya**

RCOA was one of 76 signatories to a statement expressing concern at the plight of Rohingya people one year after violence erupted in Myanmar's Rakhine state. The statement detailed advocacy undertaken by civil society groups to draw international attention to issues around violence, humanitarian need, statelessness and identity, property rights, discrimination, freedom of movement and crimes against humanity. The statement called for greater protections from the Myanmar Government and governments hosting Rohingya refugees. Read the full statement here <http://www.aprrn.info/1/index.php/resources/press-releases/238-one-year-after-the-violence-began>

### **Settlement Policy Network focuses on humanitarian family reunion**

A recent national Settlement Policy Network teleconference discussed recent changes affecting refugee and humanitarian entrants seeking to reunite with their families through the Special Humanitarian Program and family stream of the Migration Program. Presentations were made by Mary Hanna and Melinda Jackson from Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre in Melbourne. The report is available here: <http://refugeecouncil.org.au/r/spn/130403-SPN.pdf>

### **Toowoomba Regional Council a Refugee Welcome Zone**

During Refugee Week, Toowoomba Regional Council joined the Refugee Welcome Zone initiative, bringing the number of local councils to become Refugee Welcome Zones to 83. The announcement was made during Toowoomba's Walk Together event and was attended by RCOA board member Bobby Whitfield. Find out more about the Refugee Welcome Zone initiative at: <http://refugeecouncil.org.au/g/rwz.php>

### **2000 Twitter followers and counting**

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 at [www.facebook.com/pages/Refugee-Council-of-Australia-RCOA/157472830949702](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Refugee-Council-of-Australia-RCOA/157472830949702). Our Twitter feed is @OzRefugeeCounc.

### **You, too, can support an informed, independent voice on refugee policy**

The work of the Refugee Council cannot survive without the financial support of people who share our belief in the importance of fair treatment of refugees and asylum seekers. Donations to RCOA are tax-deductible. Annual membership fees are just \$55 for individuals (concession rate is \$27.50) and organisational membership is on a sliding scale from \$55 to \$440, depending on annual organisational expenditure. For more information about making a donation or becoming a member of the Refugee Council, see <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/g/don.php>.

## **COMING EVENTS**

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### **"Alive and Out There" theatre series**

**Saturday 11 May to Sunday 4 August, various locations across Sydney**

This theatre series explores the experience of cancer in multicultural communities. A series of plays will be performed in Macedonian, Greek and Arabic. The series is organised by the Multicultural Health Service and South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, and funded by the Cancer Institute NSW.

**Details:** for more information and to book tickets, contact Lynne Baker on (02) 9382 8671 or [Lynne.Baker@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Lynne.Baker@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au).

### **Your rights and responsibilities as an asylum seeker**

**First Friday of the month, May to December, Fitzroy VIC**

These free information sessions for asylum seekers, hosted by the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, will provide information on issues such as work rights and responsibilities, the Australian workplace, employment options for people with overseas qualifications, managing stress, budgeting and money matters, how the Australian Government works and support available to permanent residents. Transport reimbursements are available.

**Details:** all sessions 5:30pm to 7:30pm; Ecumenical Migration Centre, 123 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy; for further information and to register, contact Marta Kreiser at [mkreiser@bsl.org.au](mailto:mkreiser@bsl.org.au), 0420 961 717 or or (03) 8412 8706, Jeremiah Temple at [jeremiaht@spectrumvic.org.au](mailto:jeremiaht@spectrumvic.org.au), 0407 338 965 or (03) 9496 0200.

### **"Mary Meets Mohammad" national screenings**

**July to September, across Australia**

This documentary film follows the arrival of Tasmania's first detention centre through the eyes of local Christian woman and knitting club member Mary, and Muslim Afghan Hazara asylum seeker Mohammad, who is detained inside the centre, as they connect through the gift of a knitted beanie. The film is now screening in cinemas nationwide.

**Details:** for information about screenings in your area, visit <http://www.marymeetsmohammad.com/index.php/screenings>.

### **Exhibition: Departed and Gone to the Unseen**

**Wednesday 3 July to Saturday 27 July, Waterloo NSW**

This exhibition features works by Saif Almurayati, who fled Iraq in 1991 due to political persecution. He then lived in refugee camps both in Iran and Turkey for one year before settling in Syria, where he lived for seven years. In 1998 he migrated to Australia and spent the first years adapting to the new culture. In 2012 he graduated from the National Art School in Sydney and in the same year became winner of the MUA Blake Prize Award for Human Justice for his video work "Unfolding History".

**Details:** 11:00am-5:00pm Tuesday to Saturday; Janet Clayton Gallery, 2 Danks Street, Waterloo; for further details, visit <http://www.janetclaytongallery.com.au/>.

### **2013 Heartlands Refugee Art Prize Exhibition**

**Thursday 4 to Saturday 27 July, Dandenong VIC**

Now in its fourth year, the 2013 Heartlands Refugee Art Prize Exhibition was presented by AMES and Multicultural Arts Victoria in partnership with Parks Victoria, VicHealth and the Victorian Multicultural Commission. Seventy talented refugee artists submitted their work for this year's prize and artists from sixteen countries were represented in the artworks that were shortlisted. The exhibition will showcase the shortlisted entries, including all the winning artworks.

**Details:** Monday to Friday 11:00am-5:00pm, Saturday 11:00am-3:00pm; Walker Street Gallery, cnr Walker and Robinson Streets, Dandenong; for further details, visit <http://www.ames.net.au/heartlands-refugee-art-prize/2013-heartlands-refugee-art-prize.html>.

### **Whittlesea Social Soccer Program**

**From Friday 12 July, Thomastown VIC**

A free soccer program for young people aged 16 to 30 who are newly arrived and from an asylum seeker or refugee background. Participants must fill in an application form to take part.

**Details:** every Friday 2:00pm-5:00pm; TRAC, 55 Main Street, Thomastown; for further details, contact Jeremiah Temple on 0407 338 965 or [rap@spectrumvic.org.au](mailto:rap@spectrumvic.org.au).

### **Unsafe Haven: Hazaras in Afghanistan**

**Saturday 13 to Tuesday 30 July, Adelaide SA**

This photo exhibition highlights the conditions of Hazaras in the post-Taliban period and tells the stories of a minority group in a war-torn and conflict-ridden country. It includes a series of striking photographs depicting the daily lives and continuing persecution of Hazaras in violation of their human rights. It offers a profound insight in the humanity and the personal suffering of the Hazara people in Afghanistan, giving an important insight into Afghan society. The aim is to highlight the human impacts of persecution in Afghanistan, and to assert the human face of refugee rights in Australia. The photographs are by Abdul Karim Hekmat, a youth worker and freelance writer based in Sydney. He is a Hazara refugee from Afghanistan and studied under a UTS Temporary Protection Visa scholarship.

**Details:** 10:00am-5:00pm Tuesday to Friday (opening night 13 July 4:00pm-6:00pm; Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre, cnr North Terrace and Morphett Street, Adelaide.

### **"A New Day": Kate Maclurcan and friends CD launch**

**Sunday 21 July, Balmain NSW**

A new album by Kate Maclurcan features songs by Buffy Sainte Marie, Neil Diamond, Kristina Olsen, Kris Kristofferson, Richard Thompson, Guy Clarke, John Prine, Chris While and Australia's Eric Bogle and Pat Drummond, as well as original songs by Kate. All proceeds will be donated to the Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation and Balmain for Refugees.

**Details:** suggested donation \$25.00; 3:00pm; Circle Cafe, 344 Darling Street, Balmain; to book, call Kate on (02) 9705 1085 or 0412 771 394, or e-mail [katemaclurcan@hotmail.com](mailto:katemaclurcan@hotmail.com).

### **Shalom Long Lunch: Restoring Hope**

**Sunday 21 July, Carcoar NSW**

With guest speakers from Nuba Mountain and South Sudan.

**Details:** \$25.00; 12:30pm-2:30pm; Shalom House of Prayer, Carcoar; to book, call (02) 6367 3058.

### **Two-day course: Violence against women in refugee communities**

**Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 July, Parramatta NSW**

Hosted by the Education Centre Against Violence (part of NSW Health), this course provides an understanding of the specific needs related to refugee women's experience of domestic violence. It outlines a framework for understanding domestic violence which covers the definition, prevalence and impact. It also allows workers to understand additional challenges such as past refugee experiences, immigration and settlement issues. The course is designed to reflect the diversity of cultural and social considerations that matter when working with refugee women, their children and their protection preferences and contexts.

**Details:** 9:00am-5:00pm; for further details and to enrol, visit <http://www.ecav.health.nsw.gov.au/ecav/index.asp?pg=2&s=C&cNo=159>.

### **Simple steps: Preparing families for floods and storms**

**Wednesday 24 July, Toowoomba QLD**

Hosted by the Agencies CALD Action Group, this workshop will explain Toowoomba's weather and seasons; how to prepare the home for floods and storms; knowing when to prepare; risks in the home during floods and storms; risks outside in floods and storms and who comes to the door during an emergency.

**Details:** 12:15pm-1:45pm; University of Southern Queensland R113 Lecture Theatre.

### **A New Way: New Policies, New Politics with Julian Burnside**

**Wednesday 24 July, Redfern NSW**

Join Julian Burnside QC AO and Greens Candidate for Sydney Dianne Hiles for a discussion on the new policies and politics needed to create a new way of caring for refugees. The MC will be Dr Mehreen Faruqi, the Greens' newest and Australia's only Muslim woman MP.

**Details:** entry \$10.00; 7:00pm; Redfern Town Hall, 73 Pitt Street, Redfern.

### **STARTTS workshop: Core concepts in working with people from refugee backgrounds**

**Thursday 25 July, Griffith NSW**

This one-day introductory workshop is designed to put a framework of understanding around working with refugees and asylum seekers. It focuses on understanding the link between what refugees have been through, the sorts of issues and behaviours they may present with, and how to work in a way that fosters feelings of trust, safety and control, while minimising the risk of retraumatisation. Participants will be encouraged to think about how to apply the concepts to their own workplace, and will leave the workshop feeling more confident in utilising their skills and experience with refugee and asylum seeker clients.

**Details:** \$149.00 (students \$99.00); 9:30am-4:30pm; Griffith Ex-Servicemen's Club, Mirrool 2, Jondaryan Avenue, Griffith; register online at <http://www.startts.org.au>.

### **Fundraising dinner for Hazara Women Australia**

**Thursday 25 July, Newtown NSW**

Support Afghan women and learn how you can make a difference to their lives at this fundraising dinner. Special guest speakers Najeeba Wazefadost and Mahboba Rawi will inspire and move you as they share their incredible journeys and what they are doing to help. All money raised on the night will go towards Hazara Women of Australia, a not-for-profit organisation that creates a healthy, peaceful and

safe atmosphere for refugee Afghan women who have experienced war and persecution, and the Bamiyan English School for Girls. Hosted by the Amnesty International NSW Women's Network.

**Details:** tickets \$45.00; 6:30pm-9:30pm; 1/501 King Street, Newtown; for further details and to book, go to [http://www.amnesty.org.au/nsw/event/32118?utm\\_source=nsw\\_newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=24Jun2013](http://www.amnesty.org.au/nsw/event/32118?utm_source=nsw_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=24Jun2013)

### **STARTTS workshop: Core concepts in working with people from refugee backgrounds**

**Friday 26 July, Carramar NSW**

This one-day introductory workshop is designed to put a framework of understanding around working with refugees and asylum seekers. It focuses on understanding the link between what refugees have been through, the sorts of issues and behaviours they may present with, and how to work in a way that fosters feelings of trust, safety and control, while minimising the risk of retraumatisation. Participants will be encouraged to think about how to apply the concepts to their own workplace, and will leave the workshop feeling more confident in utilising their skills and experience with refugee and asylum seeker clients.

**Details:** \$149.00 (students \$99.00); 9:30am-4:30pm; STARTTS, 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; register online at <http://www.startts.org.au>.

### **Cultural Diversity: Promoting communication and inclusion**

**Friday 26 July, Parramatta NSW**

Cultural diversity impacts on every aspect of service delivery, ranging from communicating with both clients and co-workers, to legislative compliance including anti-discrimination legislation, to developing workplace cultures that are culturally sensitive, inclusive and supportive. This workshop is designed to assist workers in the community services sector to appreciate the diversity of our population, to reflect on cultural frameworks in society and to respond in an effective, appropriate and professional manner with their clients and co-workers.

**Details:** \$242.00; 9:30am-4:30pm; UnitingCare Institute of Family Practice, Level 4, 146 Marsden Street, Parramatta; to register, visit [http://ifp.nsw.edu.au/professional\\_development/running\\_groups/cultural\\_diversity](http://ifp.nsw.edu.au/professional_development/running_groups/cultural_diversity).

### **Iftar Dinner hosted by the Afghan Australian Development Organisation**

**Friday 26 July, Melbourne VIC**

This event will feature a delicious Afghan buffet, live Afghan music, henna painting and an Afghan bazaar. Ticket package includes entertainment, halal buffet dinner, dessert and Tea. Soft drinks may be purchased separately.

**Details:** tickets \$40.00 (\$35.00 concession); doors open 5:00pm until 10:00pm; Arts House, North Melbourne Town Hall, 521 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne; book online at <http://www.trybooking.com/54005>; for further details, contact Bianca on 0404 893 324 or [bpilla@aado.org.au](mailto:bpilla@aado.org.au).

### **Celebration of African Australians awards ceremony**

**Saturday 27 July, Canberra ACT**

This awards ceremony will acknowledge and celebrate the work of community leaders, past and present Board members of African-Australian community organisations, distinguished members of African communities and foremost organisations supporting African communities in Australia.

**Details:** 5:00pm-11:00pm; Parliament House, Canberra; for further details and bookings, visit <http://awards.celebrateafricanaustralians.org>.

### **International Dance and Music Festival**

**Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 July, Richlands QLD**

The International Dance and Music Festival is the premier multicultural event in the Wacol and Richlands region. It celebrates the cultural diversity of South West Brisbane and encourages people from various cultures to share and celebrate together by enjoying dancings, arts, music, food and stories from different cultures.

**Details:** 48 Bandara Street, Richlands; for further information, e-mail [spcwacol@hotmail.com](mailto:spcwacol@hotmail.com).

### **Film screening: Machan**

**Sunday 28 July, Sydney NSW**

A Sri Lankan-made film based on a string of real life events, "Machan" asks the question: what motivates people to seek refuge? Ticket price includes traditional Sri Lankan snacks.

**Details:** tickets \$20.00 presale or \$25.00 at the door; from 3:00pm; Tribal Theatre, 346 George Street, Sydney; to book tickets, e-mail [info@fermentcollaborate.org](mailto:info@fermentcollaborate.org), visit <http://www.fermentcollaborate.org> or call Steph on 0413 057 138.

### **Diversity and Disability Forum**

#### **Wednesday 31 July, Werribee VIC**

Designed for people working in the disability sector who would like to improve their understanding of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, this forum will cover topics such as: education on working with people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities around disability issues; addressing and supporting your needs; new developments in the disability system; and understanding and interpretation of cultural differences and approaches.

**Details:** 10:00am-2:00pm; Wayaperri House, 106 Duncans Road, Werribee; RSVP by 24 July to [AgedDisabilityEvents@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:AgedDisabilityEvents@wyndham.vic.gov.au) or call (03) 9742 0964.

### **Workshop: Working with CALD and refugee communities in a mental health setting**

#### **Monday 5 August, Sydney NSW**

Presented by Jatinder Kaur, Director of JK Diversity Consultants, this workshop will cover the following topics: cultural factors in mental health and illness; migration, settlement and acculturation, communication and language considerations; transcultural assessment and treatment; and cultural competency in a mental health setting.

**Details:** \$220.00 per person; 9:30am-4:30pm; Centre for Community Welfare Training, Level 4, 699 George Street, Sydney; to register, call (02) 9281 8822, e-mail [ccwt@acwa.asn.au](mailto:ccwt@acwa.asn.au) or visit [http://www.acwa.asn.au/Course\\_Details11.php?recid=7210](http://www.acwa.asn.au/Course_Details11.php?recid=7210).

### **2013 Youth Leaders Day and Symposium**

#### **Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 August, Parramatta NSW**

This two-day event is hosted by the NSW Community Relations Commission. The first day will be Youth Leaders Day, a day dedicated to giving young people a voice on issues facing our multicultural society now and into the future. The second day will be a symposium providing an opportunity to showcase current innovations in community and government projects, and for community leaders, future community leaders and practitioners to build networks and share ideas on the best ways to promote a cohesive and harmonious multicultural society in which diversity is recognised as a strength and an asset.

**Details:** Novotel Parramatta, 350 Church Street, Parramatta; for further details, call (02) 8255 6767.

### **2013 Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network Forum**

#### **Tuesday 6 August, Dandenong VIC**

This Forum will address issues arising from recent academic research findings that people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are under-represented in the local government workforce. The forum will increase the knowledge and skills of local government around our workforce profile and planning, the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce, EEO and human rights perspectives and current good practice.

**Details:** The Drum Theatre, 226 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong; to register, visit <http://www.mav.asn.au/events/Pages/vlgmin-2013-forum-06082013.aspx>.

### **Workshop: Working with CALD and refugee communities in a mental health setting**

#### **Wednesday 7 August, Eight Mile Plains QLD**

Presented by Jatinder Kaur, Director of JK Diversity Consultants, this workshop will cover the following topics: cultural factors in mental health and illness; migration, settlement and acculturation, communication and language considerations; transcultural assessment and treatment; and cultural competency in a mental health setting.

**Details:** Key Assets Fostering, Conference Room, Building 7, Freeway Office Park, 2728 Logan Road, Eight Mile Plains; to register, e-mail [support@jkdiversityconsultants.com.au](mailto:support@jkdiversityconsultants.com.au) or call 0422 887 579.

### **STARTTS workshop: 'Accidental' counsellors: Responding to refugee trauma-related behaviours (for non-counsellors)**

Friday 9 August, Carramar NSW

This one-day workshop has been designed to give workers not trained as counsellors some basic tips and skills for how to recognise and deal with difficult behaviours in refugee trauma clients in the workplace. It will give you practical skills in containing situations such as: disclosure of traumatic stories; sadness and tearfulness; anger outbursts; dissociation; panic attacks and suicide threats, and an understanding of appropriate follow-up referrals.

**Details:** \$149.00 (students \$99.00); 9:30am-4:30pm; STARTTS, 152-168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar; register online at <http://www.startts.org.au>.

### **Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival 2013**

Sunday 11 August, Toowoomba QLD

The Toowoomba Languages and Cultures Festival will feature art and photo exhibitions, a health and wellness expo, music and dance performances, information displays, international food, market stalls and workshops.

**Details:** entry \$5.00 for adults (children free); 10:00am-4:00pm; Queens Park, Toowoomba; for further details call 131 872, e-mail [info@tims.org.au](mailto:info@tims.org.au) or visit <http://tims.org.au/TLC-festival>.

### **Working for us with us: How to work better with our Karen community**

Tuesday 13 August, Werribee VIC

Learn how to work more effectively with the growing Karen community in Melbourne. This training will be facilitated by a group of Karen women and has been developed in consultation with Karen leaders and community members. Topics will include: understanding ethnic diversity in Burma; life in refugee camps and in Australia; beliefs, values and traditions (especially family relationships); and how the Karen community deals with problems (the role of leaders, elders and religion).

**Details:** 10:00am-2:00pm; Council Chamber, Wyndham Civic Centre, 45 Princes Highway, Werribee; to RSVP, contact Christina on 0411 818 237 or [christinageo20@gmail.com](mailto:christinageo20@gmail.com).

## **NEW RESEARCH, STATEMENTS AND PUBLICATIONS**

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### **Red Cross Vulnerability Report on asylum seekers**

Red Cross has released its inaugural "Vulnerability Report: Inside the process of seeking asylum in Australia". The report provides rare insights into the daily realities of people seeking asylum to highlight the personal and human dimension of their plight. Read the report here [http://www.redcross.org.au/files/20130614\\_Inaugural\\_Vulnerability\\_Report\\_LR.pdf](http://www.redcross.org.au/files/20130614_Inaugural_Vulnerability_Report_LR.pdf)

### **Second UNHCR report on Manus Island conditions**

UNHCR has released its second report on the Manus Island Regional Processing Centre (RPC) in Papua New Guinea. The report finds that while there are improvements since its last mission in January, including the transfer of all children and their families to Australia, the current arrangements still do not meet international protection standards for the reception and treatment of asylum-seekers. Read more here <http://bit.ly/1axirDQ>

### **Fact sheets on asylum process**

Refugee and Casework Services (RACS) has published fact sheets on a range of issues including: completing and lodging protection visas; information on the Refugee Review Tribunal, family reunion, writing letters to request ministerial intervention, appeals and living on bridging visas. The fact sheets are available here <http://bit.ly/15gZT3K>

### **Alternatives to offshore processing**

Labor for Refugees has published a collection of submissions made to the Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers. "Alternatives to Offshore Processing" includes an analysis and an update on a number of aspects of refugee policy. The book is available at <http://www.palmerhiggsbooks.com.au/catalog-product-view-id-658-s-alternatives-to-offshore-processing.html>

### **"Getting settled: refugee women in Australia"**

“Getting settled” is intended for anyone who has an interest in refugee women and their settlement experience in Australia. It contains facts and figures and a range of good practice ideas that have been shown to be effective in the successful settlement of women and their families. It recounts the real-life stories of some of the women themselves. Access the report at [http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/\\_pdf/women-refugees-in-australia.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/settle/_pdf/women-refugees-in-australia.pdf)

### **Humanitarian Settlement Services Regional Profiles**

While the majority of humanitarian settlement occurs in metropolitan areas, many humanitarian entrants have successfully settled in regional communities or have subsequently moved to regional locations. The Humanitarian Settlement Services Regional Profiles provide information on services, accommodation, education, health services and employment opportunities in each regional location. Access the profiles at the bottom of this page

<http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/settlement-programs/hss.htm>

### **Evaluation of community detention expansion**

An independent evaluation of the expansion of community detention in Australia has been released by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The evaluation from the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, found community detention was most appropriate for people who would benefit from increased autonomy, but were still vulnerable and required ongoing support. It found community detention was also particularly appropriate for unaccompanied minors. The report highlights the need for better transition into and out of the program, improved decision-making around travel, access to facilities and events, and suggests a review of the current service provider contracting arrangements. The report indicates that there may be scope for resources and support systems to be better tailored to meet the needs of some individual clients, especially those who are most vulnerable. Read the report here <http://bit.ly/11AN4of>

### **Report: “Promoting the engagement of interpreters in Victorian health services”**

The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House) has launched a report “Promoting the engagement of interpreters in Victorian health services”, which documents the findings of a two-year study undertaken in response to regular reports from Foundation House clients. The full report is available here <http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=121443>

### **New paper on regional settlement of humanitarian entrants**

“Australian Geographer” has published a report on the settlement outcomes of African humanitarian entrants of South Sudanese background in Murray Bridge, South Australia. The participants were self-settled secondary movers from Adelaide. The study found job opportunities were an incentive to move to Murray Bridge and that study participants enjoyed better settlement outcomes in Murray Bridge than in the city. However, some later left Murray Bridge because of a lack of opportunities for tertiary education. The results highlight issues of sustainability of settlement and retention, in regional centres in Australia, and of the fluidity of attraction and retention factors and therefore settlement in regional centres. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00049182.2013.789590#.Udzuom3qWJU>

### **A Christian perspective on asylum seeker and refugee policy**

The Anglican Diocese of Brisbane has produced a study guide to assist parish and other groups in exploring asylum seeker and refugee-related issues from a Christian perspective. Access the guide here: <http://www.australianchurchesrefugeetaskforce.com.au/refugees-and-asylum-seekers-study-guide/>

### **Life inside detention centres**

SBS has launched an interactive online documentary “Detention Centre” to provide an insight into detention conditions based on the views and perspectives of people who have lived, worked or volunteered at immigration detention centres. Former detainees share their experiences and describe a typical day in detention, tell tales of planned and failed escapes, recount stories of drug use and self-harm, and in the process reveal the psychological and emotional impact of being in detention. Experts and academics share their views, including RCOA CEO Paul Power, former Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock, International Detention Coalition Director Grant Mitchell and UTS Professor of Sociology Dr Andrew Jakubowicz. The site also includes an interactive data visualisation that will be updated regularly as new figures on immigration detention are released. The interactive feature uses maps and demographic information to provide a clearer view of the statistics associated with the asylum-seeker debate. View the documentary at [sbs.com.au/detentioncentre](http://sbs.com.au/detentioncentre)

### **UNHCR paper on alternatives to detention**

“Building Empirical Research into Alternatives to Detention: Perceptions of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees in Toronto and Geneva”. The study identifies the willingness of asylum seekers to cooperate with countries of refuge based on their fear of being returned and identifies the conditions that foster cooperation. Download the report here <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/51a6fec84.pdf>

### **New Human Rights Commission publications**

The Australian Human Rights Commission has released updated publications on immigration detention, asylum seekers and refugees. Access the links at <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/immigration-detention-asylum-seekers-and-refugees>

### **Human Rights Watch report: Barely Surviving**

The report details Indonesia’s poor treatment of migrant and asylum-seeking children and documents the arrivals of children in Indonesia after they have fled persecution, violence, and poverty in Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Burma, and elsewhere. The report finds Indonesia detains hundreds of migrant and asylum-seeking children each year without giving them a way to challenge their detention with Indonesian law permits up to 10 years of immigration detention. Read the report here <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/06/23/barely-surviving>

### **Fact sheet on perinatal mental health for CALD women**

Beyondblue has issued a new fact sheet on perinatal mental health of women from culturally and linguistically-diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Aimed at primary care health professionals, it is available at <https://www.bspg.com.au/dam/bsg/product?client=BEYONDBLUE&prodid=BL/1082&type=file>

### **Safe havens for the displaced: study of four countries**

The Berkeley Human Rights Center, with the support of UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service, has undertaken a detailed review of “safe shelter” arrangements for the survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in situations of human displacement. Case studies from Colombia, Haiti, Kenya and Thailand, as well as a comparative analysis are available at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a1d28526.html>

### **The politics of Rwanda’s cessation clause**

A new paper by Kelly O’Connor analyses the invocation of the cessation clause for refugee from Rwanda. The paper covers concerns raised by international human rights organisations and refugees that the clause is being invoked prematurely, leading to rejected asylum applications, coercive pressure to return and potentially refoulement. The paper is available at: <http://bit.ly/11cyFce>

### **Mixed migration and refugee protection in the Horn of Africa and Yemen**

“Migrant Smuggling in the Horn of Africa and Yemen: the political economy and protection risks” is the first in a series of nine research reports in a mixed migration series. The report documents the social economy and protection risks associated with mixed migration flows involving Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia (including Puntland), Somaliland and Yemen. It is a compilation of most recent knowledge, data and analysis available of migrant smuggling in the region. The report is available at <http://www.regionalmms.org/index.php?id=2>

### **Social cohesion study on multicultural Australia**

A research paper prepared for the Joint Commonwealth, State and Territory Research Advisory Committee identifies and examines current and emerging drivers for social cohesion, social division and conflict in multicultural Australia and identify strategies that increase social cohesion. Read the report here [http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/research/\\_pdf/current-emerging-drivers-social-cohesion-division-conflict.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/research/_pdf/current-emerging-drivers-social-cohesion-division-conflict.pdf)

### **Victorian study on race-based discrimination**

In the first study of its kind in Australia, VicHealth’s bystander research on race-based discrimination provides a sound evidence base to develop further programs. The findings also point to future directions in research. Read the report here <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/bystander-discrimination>

### **Research paper on sexual violence in conflict zones**

This research paper explores the evidence of the impact of initiatives to reduce the risk and incidence of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict zones and other humanitarian crises in lower and middle-income countries. Download the report here <http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=3405>

### **Resource on opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers**

Occupational Opportunities for Refugees and Asylum Seekers Inc aims to stimulate and support the occupational therapy profession to engage people with refugee experiences. Find out more here <http://oofras.com/>

### **Australian refugee resettlement biography**

A revised version of the Australian refugee resettlement bibliography has been published. Access the update at <http://apo.org.au/research/resettlement-refugees-australia-bibliography-5th-rev-ed>

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

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*For employment opportunities, go to <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/g/job.php>. For volunteering opportunities, go to <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/g/vol.php>.*

### **Funding to help refugee job seekers find work**

The Federal Government has announced a \$6.6 million fund to help tackle higher levels of unemployment among immigrant and refugee job seekers in Australia. Under the Migrant Communities Employment Fund (MCEF) fund, employer organisations will receive funding to develop and implement innovative projects to help job seekers prepare for and find work. Projects can be funded up to \$200,000 each and for a maximum of two years. Projects can be targeted to assist first and second generation migrants. Migrant community organisations, other community organisations, employment service providers and employers can apply to receive funding for projects through the Fund. Enquiries can be directed to [MCEFAdmin@deewr.gov.au](mailto:MCEFAdmin@deewr.gov.au). Further details are available here: <http://deewr.gov.au/migrant-communities-employment-fund>

### **Free legal advice for refugees and asylum seekers in Sydney**

The Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) in Sydney is partnering with Metro Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC) and Refugee Advice & Casework Service (RACS) to provide free face-to-face legal advice to recently arrived migrants, refugees and asylum seekers on everyday legal problems including loans, money and bills, Centrelink, discrimination, car accidents, fines, immigration, housing, work issues, scams and unfair deals. Clinics will be held on Tuesdays between 9.00am and 1.00pm at the MMRC's Marrickville office at 20-22 Station Street, near Marrickville railway station. Make an appointment with a lawyer by contacting (02) 9114 1793.

### **Family reunion guide**

The Refugee and Immigration Legal Service in Queensland (RAILS) has produced a guide for people assisting proposers who are applying to bring family members to Australia under the offshore Humanitarian Program. The guide can be used by registered migration agents giving individual advice and group information sessions, community volunteers assisting in form-filling. It can also be used as a "self-help" kit for those able to prepare their own applications. For further information contact the Education Coordinator at RAILS on (07) 3846 3189 or [admin@rails.org.au](mailto:admin@rails.org.au). Access the guide here [http://caseforrefugees.org.au/media/3577/refugee\\_family\\_reunion\\_guide\\_rails.pdf](http://caseforrefugees.org.au/media/3577/refugee_family_reunion_guide_rails.pdf)

### **Applications sought for Refugee Youth Sports Sponsorship program in NSW**

The Community Relations Commission NSW is offering sponsorship of up to \$500 per person under the Refugee Youth Sports Sponsorship Program. Sponsorship is available to cover costs associated with playing team sports, including registration and game fees, uniforms, and playing equipment. Applications will be accepted from registered sporting organisations in NSW, participating in a sports league competition, applying on behalf of their eligible players. To be eligible for sponsorship, players must be: 25 years of age or younger; settled in Australia within the last five years (refugee or humanitarian entry); financially disadvantaged or of school age. For further information contact (02) 8255 6767, [sports.sponsorship@crc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sports.sponsorship@crc.nsw.gov.au) or visit [http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/refugee\\_youth\\_sports\\_sponsorship\\_program](http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/refugee_youth_sports_sponsorship_program).

### **EOI for National Community Hubs**

Primary schools and community centres are being invited to submit an EOI for participation in the National Community Hubs Program. The program will fund the creation of a new community hub leader, who would be engaged to develop programs for new migrant parents and their children, bolstering social cohesion, language, literacy and learning outcomes and assisting the transition to formal schooling. The EOI is open to primary schools and community centres in the local government areas of Bankstown, Blacktown and Parramatta (NSW), Brimbank and Dandenong (Victoria) and Logan (Queensland). The EOI process is open until 26 July, 2013. For further information, visit <http://www.scanlonfoundation.org.au/>.

### **Victorian local government multicultural forum**

The Municipal Association of Victoria is partnering with the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network to deliver an annual forum that will this year target local government workforce and staff development planners, and recruitment decision makers. Registration will also be open to other local government stakeholders such as Victorian and federal government departments and community sector organisations. The forum will address issues arising from recent academic research findings that people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds are under-represented in the local government workforce. The forum will increase the knowledge and skills of local government around our workforce profile and planning, the benefits of a culturally diverse workforce, EEO and human rights perspectives, and current good practice. The forum will be held at The Drum Theatre, 226 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong on Tuesday, 6 August between 10.00am and 3.30pm. RSVP by Wednesday, 31 July. Further details are available at <http://www.mav.asn.au/events/Pages/vlgin-2013-forum-06082013.aspx>

### **Call to settlement workers to assist with research**

Settlement workers with experience working with humanitarian entrants settling in Australia are invited to take part in an online survey for a research study. The research is being conducted by Dr Catherine Flynn a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Social Work at Monash University and PhD student Paula Fernandez Arias. The study aims to identify how the resettlement process is understood and experienced by settlement workers and humanitarian entrants alike. If you wish to take part in the study please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/settlementworker>. The survey takes 15 to 30 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and you can withdraw from the survey at any time you like. If you have any questions please email Paula Fernandez Arias at [paula.fernandez@monash.edu](mailto:paula.fernandez@monash.edu).

### **Feedback sought on settlement needs in NSW**

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) is seeking feedback on settlement issues affecting humanitarian entrants from NSW community members, settlement service providers and other stakeholders as part of the Settlement Needs Consultation. The feedback informs the delivery of settlement services. Feedback is due by Tuesday, 6 August. To access and complete feedback forms, contact (02) 8666 5466.

### **Speak out on refugee issues in the Asia-Pacific region**

The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN) has launched a "Speak Out" blog which aims to provide a platform for members, non-members and refugee themselves to speak out and share their stories. The content is not restricted in any as long as it is related to refugee issues in the Asia Pacific contexts. Personal stories, interviews, articles, reviews, opinion papers are eligible. APRRN is also looking for guest bloggers. Find out more at [http://aprrn.info/aprrn\\_blog/](http://aprrn.info/aprrn_blog/)

### **Youth and media mentoring project needs young people**

Young people from diverse cultures and faiths, aged 18 to 25 years have the opportunity to be part of a free documentary filmmaking program at Channel 31 and Youthworx from mid-November 2013 to mid-February 2014. The young people will be selected on the originality of their ideas and their willingness to be involved. Participants will meet with professionals and mentors in the industry and learn the basic skills of filmmaking and documentaries. Sessions include writing, use of camera, lighting, sound and pre-production. Participants will be supported to produce four short films to be aired on Channel 31 early next year. The deadline for applications is Friday, 30 August. For more information and to download registration forms visit [www.c31.org.au/workingtitle](http://www.c31.org.au/workingtitle). Further information is available from Kelly at [workingtitle@c31.org.au](mailto:workingtitle@c31.org.au) or (03) 9660 3131.

### **Australian Human Rights Awards**

Nominations for the Australian Human Rights Awards are being sought to honour individuals and organisations working to achieve better human rights outcomes. The Awards will be held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney on 19 December between 5.30pm and 7.30pm. Nominations close Friday, 13 September, 2013. For details and information on how to nominate, visit <https://hrawards.humanrights.gov.au/nominations>. If you require assistance to submit a nomination, contact (02) 9284 9779.

### **Multicultural Arts and Festivals Grants program funding available**

Community groups and organisations can apply for grants of up to \$5000 for multicultural arts and festivals projects. These projects provide opportunities for Australians of all backgrounds to come together and share cultural experiences. Find out more about eligibility and how to apply at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/dscp/maf/g/>

### **Sudanese Employment Workshop in Orange**

Orange City Council's Migrant Support Service will hold a free Sudanese Employment Workshop at TAFE NSW Orange G Block on Tuesday, 23 July, 2013 between 10.00am and 1.00pm. The workshop has been developed with employers, training organisations and Job Service Australia members. Contact Anni Gallagher on (02) 6393 8625 or [agallagher@orange.nsw.gov.au](mailto:agallagher@orange.nsw.gov.au)

### **Relationship help for African-Somali families in Melbourne's north**

The Greensborough Family Relationship Centre in Melbourne has appointed an Accredited Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner with an African-Somali background to help strengthen family relationships, help keep families together and assist families through separation. The new practitioner is available for mediation assessment within the Centre's catchment areas in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. Further information is available by calling (03) 9404 7800, emailing [enquiries@greensboroughfrc.org.au](mailto:enquiries@greensboroughfrc.org.au) and at [www.familyrelationships.gov.au](http://www.familyrelationships.gov.au)

### **Victoria Police consultations on cultural diversity**

Victoria Police is inviting community feedback and comment on its current policies and diversity training. Consultations close 31 July. Further details are available at [http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document\\_ID=39350](http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?Document_ID=39350)

### **Victorian Multicultural Commission media Internships grants program open**

Grants are available to media organisations to support the delivery of work experience, professional development training and leadership programs to journalists. Entries close 5.00pm, Friday, 19 July. For copies of the application form, email [info@vmc.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@vmc.vic.gov.au) or visit [www.multicultural.vic.gov.au](http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au). Further information is available by calling (03) 9651 0651.

### **Youth Leaders Day and Symposium**

The Community Relations Commission (CRC) NSW is inviting young people to showcase projects at the 2013 CRC Youth Leaders Day and CRC Symposium. The events will be held on Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 August in Parramatta with the first day – the Youth Leaders Day – dedicated to the voices of young people. Community leaders, community organisation members, government agency representatives and young people come together each year at the Leaders Day and Symposium to explore major issues affecting multicultural NSW. The events offer a platform for young people to showcase successful projects. Further details are available at [http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/Projects\\_and\\_Activities/symposia](http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au/Projects_and_Activities/symposia)

Further questions or copies of the Expression of Interest form are available by contacting Cecilia Tsai on (02) 8255 6819 or at [symposiumcoordinator@crc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:symposiumcoordinator@crc.nsw.gov.au)

## **REFUGEE ISSUES IN THE MEDIA**

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A busy person's digest of some recent media coverage of refugee issues:

(Inclusion in this summary does not imply that RCOA agrees with the article's content or vouches for its accuracy)

### **Government calls on Coalition to abandon asylum policy**

The Federal Government is urging the Opposition to abandon its policy of turning back asylum seeker boats after Indonesia declared it would not be possible. Indonesia's ambassador to Australia, Nadjib

Riphat Kesoema, yesterday said his nation is only a transit country for asylum seekers and boats should be turned back to the country of origin, not Indonesia. (ABC News, 1 June)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-01/government-slams-coalitions-asylum-policy/4727304>

### **Opposition outlines asylum seeker strategy**

For the first time, the Opposition has outlined in detail how it would deal with the growing number of asylum seekers in the community. Shadow Immigration Minister Scott Morrison has told 7News he would force them to work for their welfare and be paid in vouchers not cash. (Seven News, 2 June)

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/a/-/newshome/17443495/opposition-outlines-asylum-seeker-strategy/>

### **Australia will be paying \$70,000 for each asylum seeker**

The cost of supporting more than 40,000 asylum seekers expected to be in Australia next financial year is set to average more than \$70,000 each person. And new break-down of costs this year show taxpayers have spent \$1.5 billion maintaining the detention network amid record arrivals which are approaching 22,500 this financial year. (The Daily Telegraph, 3 June) <http://bit.ly/19VrLhj>

### **Judge threatens to release Tamil asylum seekers**

A federal circuit court judge has threatened to order the release of 14 Tamil asylum seekers after becoming frustrated with information provided by government lawyers about their detention. (ABC News, 3 June)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-03/judge-threatens-to-release-tamil-asylum-seekers/4729588>

### **Gillard caves on asylum security as she calls inquiry into Jihadi threat**

Julia Gillard has ordered an investigation into how an al-Qa'ida terrorist was housed for months in low-security immigration detention, as Labor seeks to fend off opposition attacks suggesting the flood of boat arrivals is jeopardising national security. (The Australian, 6 June) <http://bit.ly/13meM5u>

### **Violent asylum seekers out on the streets, says Insider**

Asylum seekers involved in violent attacks while in immigration detention are being released into the community, including one man who assaulted staff and was involved in more than 250 incidents. The violent detainees are released before security checks into their background are completed, according to an insider with intimate knowledge of the detention system. (The Age, 7 June) <http://bit.ly/18YYdBg>

### **Massive increase prompts former official to urge fresh boat policy**

A former senior immigration official says Australia must slam the door on boat people as new figures reveal the massive increase in asylum seeker numbers in recent years. (The Australian, 7 June)

<http://bit.ly/12li3yj>

### **Charities strained as refugees seek help to survive**

Asylum seekers are inundating South Australian charities since being released into the community on the Federal Government's bridging visas. The visas - introduced last year - are designed to reduce the strain on overcrowded detention centres. (The Advertiser, 9 June) <http://bit.ly/12lii2N>

### **Customs too busy to recover asylum bodies**

Australian authorities are too busy with "high priority operations" to recover the bodies of asylum seekers whose boat sank near Christmas Island. Customs says authorities are working on intercepting and helping other distressed boats in the area and wouldn't try to recover bodies on Monday. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 10 June)

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/customs-too-busy-to-recover-asylum-bodies-20130610-2nz0p.html>

### **Coalition plan won't stop boats: former official**

A former senior official in the Immigration Department has said that Australia can expect boat arrivals to continue under a Coalition government, arguing that the opposition's plan to turn back boats and reintroduce temporary protection visas will not stop asylum seekers from making the dangerous journey to Australia. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 11 June) <http://bit.ly/106FLUK>

### **Afghans blitzed by Aussie TV ads warning on boat journeys**

Actors are being used in emotive TV ads warning Afghans they will be sent to Nauru or Manus Island if they attempt to travel to Australia by boat. The Australian-funded campaign, the first by any foreign

government in Afghanistan, uses teary characters to explain how they have no guarantees of being granted asylum. (The Australian, 11 June) <http://bit.ly/13yvAq9>

### **Towing back asylum boats 'dangerous'**

The federal government has branded the coalition's longstanding policy to turn back asylum seeker boats to Indonesia a "slogan", following comments by senior Liberal Malcolm Turnbull. But opposition immigration spokesman Scott Morrison was adamant Mr Turnbull was restating the policy to turn back boats where it was safe to do so and accused Labor of verballing the frontbencher. (The Brisbane Times, 11 June)

<http://news.brisbanetimes.com.au/breaking-news-national/towing-back-asylum-boats-dangerous-20130611-2o0v7.html>

### **PM urged to strike regional asylum deal**

Julia Gillard should urgently engage the highest levels of the Malaysian and Indonesian governments on the need for a regional agreement on processing asylum seekers, according to a member of the government's expert panel. Paris Aristotle has also appealed to the opposition and the Greens to support legislation that would allow those who come by boat to be returned to Malaysia, and ultimately Indonesia, for processing - subject to greater human rights safeguards. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 12 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/pm-urged-to-strike-regional-asylum-deal-20130611-2o26d.html>

### **Refugee mum to remain in indefinite detention**

A Sri Lankan mother-of-three will remain in indefinite detention after an independent reviewer upheld ASIO's assessment that she is a threat to national security. While two refugees and their three children were released on Wednesday after the reviewer recommended that their adverse assessments be lifted, Ranjini is one of three refugees whose ASIO assessments were upheld. (Brisbane Times, 13 June)

<http://bit.ly/1bhYrYw>

### **Former refugee leads cricket's diversity drive**

A former Iraqi refugee has been appointed to lead Cricket Australia's concerted push for diversity and broader community representation. Multicultural and Indigenous players will be among the targets of the new community engagement manager, Sam Amaliki, who experienced an unusual introduction to the game. (SBS World News, 13 June)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1777805/Former-refugee-leads-cricket's-diversity-drive>

### **Record number of children held in centres**

The number of asylum-seeker children held in closed immigration detention is at an all-time high - despite the Gillard government's policy that they should not be held in detention centres. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/record-number-of-children-held-in-centres-20130615-2ob9k.html#>

### **Coalition criminal refugee plan 'illegal'**

A Coalition policy to send criminal refugees back to countries where they may be in danger has been slammed as illegal. (The Australian, 17 June) <http://bit.ly/11q04aJ>

### **Asylum seeker debate mean spirited: UN boss**

The United Nations refugee agency has expressed alarm at a "sharp deterioration" in the quality of protection for asylum seekers coming by boat and a "worrying erosion" of public support for asylum in Australia. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 17 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/asylum-seeker-debate-mean-spirited-un-boss-20130617-2oeio.html>

### **Coalition to deport refugees convicted of nearly any crime**

Refugees could be sent back to their countries or imprisoned indefinitely for committing most crimes in Australia under a Coalition government.

This comes despite warnings by legal experts that the changes would be illegal under international law. (The Age, 18 June) <http://bit.ly/10shloz>

### **Government denies rejecting Somali refugees**

The federal government has rejected claims that Somali refugees in Indonesia are being forced to come to Australia by boat because Australia refuses to resettle them. The federal government has rejected

claims that Somali refugees in Indonesia would not be accepted through Australia's resettlement programs. (SBS World News, 18 June)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1779511/Government-denies-claim-Somali-refugees-are-being-turned-away>

### **Midnight deadline looms for Afghan refugees**

Pakistan has imposed a deadline of midnight on June 30 for Afghan refugees living within its borders to return to their homeland, and millions of Afghans in Pakistan find themselves caught - between a mounting pressure to repatriate and a growing uncertainty over the future of their country. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 18 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/midnight-deadline-looms-for-afghan-refugees-20130618-2ofii.html>

### **Coalition 'to deport criminal refugees' - SBS News**

The Federal Opposition says if it wins government, it plans to deport refugees who commit a criminal offence whilst in Australia. Refugee advocates are outraged by the proposal and human rights lawyers say it may not even be legal. (SBS World News, 19 June)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1779857/Coalition-'to-deport-criminal-refugees'/>

### **World refugee increase highest since 1999: UNHCR report**

There were 1.1 million new refugees around the world in 2012, the highest rise in new refugee numbers since 1999, statistics published by the United Nations on Wednesday show. (The Guardian, 19 June)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/19/world-refugee-numbers-1999-unhcr>

### **Global upheavals dwarf Australia's refugee numbers**

More people around the world were forced to flee their homes every day last year than the total number seeking asylum in Australia during the entire 12 months, according to the annual report on global trends by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 June)

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/global-upheavals-dwarf-australias-refugee-numbers-20130619-2ojd9.html>

### **New tactics fail to slow asylum boats**

The Gillard Government's tough approach to asylum seekers is doing nothing to slow the number of boats arriving and may be encouraging more women and children to board rickety vessels for Australia, Labor and Opposition MPs have warned. (The West Australian, 20 June)

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/breaking/17672826/new-tactics-fail-to-slow-asylum-boats/>

### **Sri Lanka calls for Tamil refugees to return home**

Sri Lanka's external affairs minister has pleaded with Tamil refugees in Australia who fled the nation's bloody civil war to come home - having quietly slipped into Canberra for talks on combating people smugglers. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/sri-lanka-calls-for-tamil-refugees-to-return-home-20130619-2oixs.html>

### **Inquest to start into asylum boat sinking**

An inquest into the presumed deaths of more than 100 passengers on board an asylum seeker boat that sank north of Christmas Island last year will begin next week. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/wa-news/inquest-to-start-into-asylum-boat-sinking-20130620-2ol1s.html>

### **Transfers signal end to families on Manus Island, claim activists**

Refugee families have been shifted off Manus Island following calls for Australia's temporary detention centre in Papua New Guinea to be shut down. The Immigration Department last night confirmed 70 people - including families and single men - had been moved from Manus yesterday to an named facility in Australia. (The Australian, 21 June) <http://bit.ly/13vsy9D>

### **Women, kids moved from PNG detention**

Women and children are being moved from Manus Island and the Opposition claims the plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of refugee families is in tatters. Single adult men are now also being rotated through the PNG camp despite the government's assurance families would be processed offshore. (The Daily Telegraph, 21 June)

<http://www.news.com.au/national-news/women-kids-moved-from-png-detention/story-fncynjr2-1226667144283>

### **Policy switch on detention of children denied**

The federal government has denied changing its stance on the detention of children at the controversial "regional processing facility" on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, despite flying some 70 people, including a number of minors, off the island on Thursday. (The Sydney Morning Herald, 22 June)

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/policy-switch-on-detention-of-children-denied-20130621-2oo7x.html>

### **Time bomb in the suburbs**

Members of Perth's growing East African community have called for intervention in dealing with refugee youth amid fears that police could become the target of an attack. An investigation by The Weekend West has found deep concerns in Perth's East African community and a prediction that rising aggression in a section of disaffected youths towards authorities could lead to extreme violence. (The West Australian, 22 June)

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-/wa/17703073/time-bomb-in-the-suburbs/>

### **Minister warns Afghan translators not guaranteed resettlement**

Afghan interpreters risking their lives to help Australian Diggers in the Middle East are not suffering delays because of the massive influx of asylum seekers, the Gillard Government says. But Defence Minister Stephen Smith warned none of the Afghans helping Australians were guaranteed resettlement under the program. (The Daily Telegraph, 24 June) <http://bit.ly/18Hkhkd>

### **Children in Indonesian immigration detention 'suffer routine brutality'**

Indonesia is systemically failing refugee and asylum seeker children who seek protection within its borders, and is responsible for "routine brutality" inflicted upon minors in Indonesian immigration detention, a damning new Human Rights Watch report says. (The Guardian, 24 June)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/24/children-indonesian-immigration-detention-brutality>

### **Red Cross appeals to 'better hearts' of politicians over refugee policy**

The Red Cross is demanding the Gillard government grant increased benefits and the right to work to asylum seekers living in the community and has appealed to the "better hearts" of all politicians that they not use asylum policy for political gain during the election campaign. (The Guardian, 25 June)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/25/red-cross-asylum-seeker-policy>

### **Windsor laments inaction on asylum seekers**

Independent MP Tony Windsor says it's a tragedy that federal parliament has failed to agree on how to deal with asylum seekers, and has turned it into a "bumper sticker" issue. (The Australian, 25 June)

<http://bit.ly/1bhBfVI>

### **Asylum seekers 'most destitute'**

Asylum seekers who have been released into the community without adequate supports or the right to work have become among the most destitute and marginalised people in the country, a study by the Australian Red Cross has found. (The Age, 26 June)

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/opinion/political-news/asylum-seekers-most-destitute-20130625-2ov7t.html>

### **Carr flags tougher boat policy under Rudd**

Key Rudd backer and cabinet minister Bob Carr says Australia needs a 'tougher, more hard-edged' asylum-seeker assessment process. Australia's asylum-seeker policies could be toughened under Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, after one of his key backers said a more "hard-edged" assessment process was needed. (SBS World News, 27 June)

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/1782974/Carr-flags-tougher-boat-policy-under-Rudd>

### **Carr's comments foreshadow Labor asylum seeker clampdown**

The Rudd government is strongly suggesting the Australian refugee processing system should not be approving the refugee claims of many asylum seekers arriving by boat and is preparing information to try to persuade the tribunals to reject more applications. (The Guardian, 28 June)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/28/rudd-government-asylum-seeker-policy>

### **Kevin Rudd urged to fix boats mistake after being sworn in**

Kevin Rudd has told colleagues he will not "lurch to the Left" on asylum-seekers, with caucus members publicly urging him to toughen Labor's policy or risk seeing his government consigned to the "dustbin of political history". (The Australian, 28 June)

<http://bit.ly/13acuKk>